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A Novel by

UPTON SINCLAIR

AUTHOR OF
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ROMAN HOLIDAY

INTRODUCTION

FROM the case records of Vincent E. Michaels, M.D., Ph.D., Neurologist:

The document here given to the scientific world embodies the experience of one of my patients, a young man whose character and social position are sufficiently revealed in the narrative. The name used is, of course, fictitious, and so is the place of residence. "Rivertown" is a small city of the North Atlantic seaboard, situated upon a navigable river, with considerable shipping, some shipbuilding, and various industries, including the factory for racing automobiles of which the narrative tells. I have changed a few details as to the "Faber" family, in order to protect the anonymity of well-known persons; this does not affect the record from the point of view of psychopathology.

That a young man who suffered a brain lesion in a serious accident should experience an hallucination is readily to be understood; likewise the fact that he himself should be firmly convinced that the hallucination was a reality. What is puzzling in the case is not the fact that "Luke Faber" came out of his three weeks' coma in a hospital with the idea that he had been living elsewhere

in the interim, but that his experience in that " elsewhere " corresponded to what his family and friends had actually been doing in the meantime. The supposition would be that his subconscious mind had been impressed by conversations of nurses and members of the family at his bedside; but all members of the family are positive that no such conversations took place, and the nurses have no knowledge of the matters in question. As a man of scientific training, I of course do not want to lend support to any form of fantasy, but I find the circumstances so striking that I asked to have them recorded. I carry out my promise to a reticent young gentleman by explaining that he has set down the details, not because he likes to talk about himself, but because a specialist in abnormal psychology urged him to do so.

THE STORY OF LUKE FABER

I

DR. MICHAELS asks me to take to this record the attitude of the Recording Angel. Since I sing in the choir of St. Thomas's, I am assumed to be on intimate terms with that official. But I tell the doctor that we Episcopalians believe in the Recording Angel because we have to, not because we like the idea. It is as hard for us as for anybody else to admit our own weaknesses.

The doctor thinks these weaknesses help to account for my " hallucination," as he calls it. I don't see how this can be, but I bow to his superior authority. He tempted me to write this story by promising that it would be read by only a few of his colleagues; now that it is done, and we are going over it, completing it by a process of question and answer, he begs me to let it be published, assuring me that details of names and family position can be altered so that no one will recognize them.

It is judged necessary that I should put in my " prejudices." This is the easier to do, because they seem to me perfectly normal beliefs, which I am ready to defend anywhere. I begin, therefore, by stating that I belong to that almost extinct species, the old-fashioned American. I have the idea that this country was settled from hardy stocks, by individuals of superior energy and powers of

endurance, who were able to take care of themselves, without asking favours of Government and charity bureaus. They lived a life which eliminated the weaklings, and they made a real contribution to civilization, in the form of institutions of self-reliance and self-government.

In other words, I take America seriously. I think we should have kept our country for the sort of people who could run it, and not permitted ourselves to be overrun by failures and outcasts from a hundred lesser tribes. Since we have failed to take that precaution, we might at least teach the newcomers sound morals and decent manners, and not permit them to demoralize us in the name of " liberalism."

I have a younger brother, Quint, with whom I have been wrangling over these matters for years, and whom I invariably think of when I refer to them. I would tell you what Quint believes, if I had ever been able to find out; but his notion of being " liberal " appears to be to refuse to have any convictions whatever. Quint has spent many years abroad, and absorbed the continental point of view, which refuses to be shocked by any form of decadence. He has played at art in Paris, music in Vienna, and philosophy in Cambridge, and knows enough about all subjects to be able to take a top-lofty attitude, and refer to members of his own family as " provincials." He does not know enough about any subject to be able to earn his living at it if he had to, but that does not trouble him, because he tells his brother airily that only an American would submit cultural acquirements to pecuniary tests. Quint is certain that we in America have no native culture, and are incapable of creating one; we are compelled to buy our artists abroad, and value them by the prices they have the nerve to charge us.

To be sure, it is possible to regard " culture " as play-

ing the fiddle and carving what Newton X called " stone dolls." I am willing to admit that in such arts the Latin races may have the better of us. But I think it is also " culture " to found a nation and build great cities. I think there is an art of living, for societies, as well as for individuals, and that the establishing of institutions, and ideals of public service necessary to make them work—that also is " culture." I won't assert that we Americans are making such a contribution to social life; I will merely say that we might do it, if we had the courage to believe in ourselves, and to retain the pioneer virtues our forefathers handed down to us.

This will, no doubt, be sufficient to explain why my younger brother refers to me affectionately as " the old troglodyte." The other day one of the witty young ladies of his very witty set told me that I was " a hoatzin," and added that I might look it up in the encyclopædia if I was curious about it. I confess that I wasn't. I watch this younger set having a delightful time sliding downhill, and for the most part I refrain from telling them what I think of them, because it is a waste of time. They will learn for themselves, and if there is nothing left of family and state when they get through, we can start again and build on the ruins.

II

That will do for my opinions, and I will get down to facts. I am twenty-eight years old as I write this, and in good health, so far as the doctors can find out; the brain

lesion, or whatever it was that caused my trouble a year ago, is entirely healed. I am something of a football player, and I go over our country club golf-course in seventy-three or thereabouts. I am close to six feet tall, of the blond type, not divinely handsome nor diabolically otherwise. I have never been married, but at the time of my accident I was engaged to a very charming girl. All that is sufficiently dull, and I left it out, but the doctor wants it in, so you have it.

I have a family tree of which I am proud, and consider that I have a right to be. We have contributed judges, senators and governors to the commonwealth for seven generations, ever since the Honourable Francis Faber, youngest son of the earl, came to this country from Scotland. To maintain such a family, to build up its prestige and train the younger generations to honour its traditions—that seems to me a form of " culture," and a worth-while achievement. I mean to see that my children know what their forefathers were, and what they believed, and how they lived up to their faith. We have some very fine oil portraits and several busts in our home; my Uncle Cornelius, who is a learned historian, has a collection of records of the family, which some day I expect to have utilized in a work of scholarship.

I have been especially fortunate in those members of my family who had to do with my own training. My grandfather was until recently United States senator from this state, and if I could give his name, I would have to say no more about him. Since I can't, I mention that he is a man of dignity and probity, who made himself such a master of our foreign relations, both past and present, that he was more powerful than our state department. My father conducts a large shipping business, and is no politician, but one to whom the politicians come for

counsel and support. My mother is a lady of the old sort, who has devoted her life to her family, and is active in charitable affairs, beloved by all who know her. Everything that home life could do for a boy and young man was done for me, and if I try to repay what the family has given me, I am showing no more than decent gratitude.

I got my early education from tutors at home, and later attended Rivertown College. I was urged to choose one of the bigger institutions, which have more prestige, but I thought Rivertown should have prestige of its own. I was half-back on a football team which won several resounding victories, and after I came out of college I helped start the alumni movement which resulted in our stadium—so that now we are able to make a real noise in the world. Of course, there are those who say—my brother Quint never fails to say it—that I wanted the stadium as a place to race and advertise motor-cars; but as a matter of fact, it was the stadium, and the "classic" to which it gave rise, which caused me to take up the manufacturing in a serious way.

I have passed over the war, which made a great dent in my mind, as it did with everyone of my generation. I got excited about it in the early stages, when I was a big, overgrown boy. Pacifism is coming into fashion now, and cynicism as to the war and the motives of those who won it. I am used to being jeered at for my beliefs—I hear my brother jeering as I write this, and my expression takes the form of a wrangle with him. I will make it brief and say I am one of those who thought that American democracy and Prussian militarism could not exist on the same planet. I said from the beginning that we would have to go in, and should get ready; I was one of those who thought at the end that we should go on to Berlin. I think we may have to go there yet.

I managed to get into an officers' training camp, by tell-

ing a fib about my age; I was husky, and they were not too particular. When America entered the war, I was made a lieutenant, and promoted to captain, in spite of my youth. They put me in charge of training, on the ground that my special knowledge was valuable, but I have always suspected that it was my father who balked my hopes to get overseas. My superior officer was a friend of the family, and father would have had to do no more than drop a hint as to the preciousness of Fabers. I have never accused him of it directly, but I was sore at the time, and I suppose Dr. Michaels is right in his reading of my psychology—that my thwarted war impulses account for my abnormal interest in high speed motoring. It was a form of revenge upon my family; since they would not let me get killed in one way, I would do it in another.

I nearly succeeded, and now I suppose I am satisfied. Anyhow, I am out of the racing game, and have made them a promise to settle down and carry on the Faber line. I have to grant the truth of their contention, that if the individual did not subordinate himself to the family, there would not be any family.

III

WHY did my "hallucination" take the form it did? why did my fancy turn to ancient Rome? That is easy to answer. My Uncle Cornelius is professor of Latin language and literature at Rivertown College, and has been a second father to me ever since I can recall. His own wife and two little children were killed in a fire caused by an exploding oil stove, and he never remarried,

but gave the rest of his life to scholarship. He lives near us, and it was natural that the nursery in which my brother and I and our two sisters were raised should have been a recreation place for him. I cannot recall a time when I did not hear Latin, and see pictures of ancient Roman scenes. As other children in the nursery say " Donnez moi du pain, s'il vous plait," we would rise from our " lecti " and sit on the " sedilia " in front of the " mensa." Old Hodge, the stately Englishman who presided over our household in those days, became accustomed to the title of tricliniarches; the housemaid knew that she was the cubicularia, and the downstairs maid the supellecticaria. This amused the servants, and we laughed with them, but with our uncle we took it seriously. We would pass hundreds of impromptu examinations. What did the Romans call this, and how did they do that? When did they first bridge the Tiber, and when did they first have glass, and what sort of police force did they employ? Quint and I could conduct our boyish arguments in Latin, after the style of mediaeval schoolmen, or Queen Elizabeth receiving the ambassador from King Philip of Spain.

What good did it do us? The question would be one for controversy. It never helped us to make money; but then, neither of us needed to make money. Uncle Cornelius would say that the purpose of culture is to set you free from the present moment, and give you a sense of the continuity of life; the essence of vulgarity is to be wrapped up in the concerns of your own time, accepting its standards as permanent. If that be so, certainly it was worth-while for children to be transported in fancy to an ancient civilization; to know these long dead people, and how they felt, how they lived day by day, what they laughed at, what they suffered, what gods they worshipped and what enemies they fought.

A curious thing to notice, how every human temperament selects its peculiar kind of food. I am interested in public affairs; some day, no doubt, I am going into politics—the situation in our city and state appears likely to compel it. What was most vivid about ancient Rome to me was the life of the Forum, its problems of war and diplomacy, and the internal struggles and changes in republic and empire. I have sat for hours and listened to my uncle and my grandfather discuss such questions. Why did Roman society decay? What caused the breakdown of the Republic? I used to hear a great deal about that. I heard also the arguments of my Uncle Martin, the husband of one of mother's sisters, who is a banker in Nebraska, and often visits us when he comes East. He brought the provincial life of America into my thoughts, and would ask Uncle Cornelius many questions about agriculture in Rome.

On the other hand, what Quint got from the classics was art and pleasure, the relaxing of moral fibre; all the things which are displeasing to me. I do not admit that it is a good thing to be set free from present-day standards, when you have no better to put in their place. I think that a part at least of Quint's restlessness has come from knowing so many different kinds of culture. The fact that Roman gods have been relegated to the books on mythology causes him to find it amusing that his elder brother should sing in a church choir; the fact that ancient Greeks and Romans tolerated sexual perversions causes him to take all moral or immoral standards with tolerance, and insist that what matters is æsthetics. You must have good manners, and be entertaining in company, and open-minded to ideas—and beyond that, everything is a theme for jesting.

There was a time when Quint's devotion to classical

moral standards very nearly compelled me to take the matter to our father. But the threat was sufficient, and he now, I believe, confines his tolerance to conversation. He found himself a wife, a brilliant young widow several years older than himself, and with a baby daughter. It wasn't what the family would have wished, but we were not consulted. The couple now have another daughter of their own, and it begins to appear that the wife is applying Quint's theories of open-mindedness. They are unhappy, as everyone who knew them foresaw; Camilla at the time of which I write was living in New York, going her own way, and the family could only wait for the catastrophe, whatever it was to be.

Since I come back again and again to my relationship to Quint, I ought to add that our quarrels are lovers' quarrels; if either were in trouble, the other would come to the rescue. That is the reality of family solidarity, which is in the deeps of us both. The difference is that I recognize the fact, while my brother tries to break away from it and deny it, and in so doing, tears himself like an animal caught in a trap.

IV

After the war I started college, but was restless and at a loss—like nearly everyone who had been in the army. I had expected martial thrills, and all that I had got was schoolmastering. Quint, who had been placed as a diplomatic aide, came back from France with a couple of the fanciest racing cars, one of them for

me, and I amused myself recklessly for a while. I took the car apart and put it together again, to make sure I understood its mechanism, and I drove it in several races, greatly to my parents' distress. I used to go out at dawn, when the roads were clear, and I narrowly missed contact with several wagons loaded with hay or milk.

That was my situation when I was lured into helping my Alma Mater on the road to fame. All the big universities had got themselves stadia, and if Rivertown remained without one it might as well turn into a school of theology. I went on a campaign of respectable banditry, and got the funds. We had just raised the last dollar when hard times hit the country, and some of the donors tried to get their money back. We hurried up and let the contracts, which helped to solve the unemployment problem in our city for a very bad summer and fall. At the same time we solved the problem of the college, for we net as high as two hundred thousand dollars in a single football season, and if any member of the faculty gets a moral spasm over the commercialism of athletics, we give him a salary rise out of our surplus.

Several circumstances combined to shape my future activities. There was a small automobile manufacturing plant in Rivertown which got into a jam during this period, and the bankers had to take it over. They were looking for somebody to put it off on, when I came forward. I had a little money, inherited from my maternal grandmother, and I knew enough about racing cars to think I knew more. The ordinary small manufacturer of automobiles no longer stands any chance, but racing cars are a special field, and I had ideas which I thought would count. I have been at it now for five years, and while I haven't got out of the " red," I still

have hopes and no regrets. The business depends more upon advertising and publicity stunts than I relish, and we are handicapped by tangles of patent rights, and exposed to damage suits of that character—not infrequently a disguised form of blackmail. But we are turning out a good car, and I am getting some fun out of it; also, Dr. Michaels has got a story which has interested him, and which he thinks will interest his colleagues.

Naturally, the college stadium loomed up as a place for racing our cars. It makes a small track for such a purpose, and we don't break any world's records, but we put up a dazzling race, full of thrills, and the crowds come from a thousand miles around. We bank the track very high at the ends, building it of wood, put together with bolts and screws, so that we can take it apart and store it over the winter. I underwrite the enterprise, and we give twenty-five thousand dollars in prizes each year; the newspapers know the event as the " Rivertown classic." I once asked a reporter what constituted a " classic," and he replied that it is a sporting event pulled off every year. I asked him if age had anything to do with it, and he answered that perhaps it did. I asked how many years, and he ventured to guess five. By that standard we are just able to qualify.

My persistence in driving the Faber car in these races has been the cause of anxiety to my family and bewilderment to my friends, so I explain it as well as I can. I observe modern men letting themselves become soft, and I decline to follow the style. A certain amount of danger in life is necessary to moral tone, and there is something in me that rebels against hiring somebody else to do a thing which I consider too risky for myself. It happens that I enjoy racing a car, and up to the time of the

smash-up, I would not be dissuaded. I announced that if I won any prizes, they would be given to charity, and our Rivertown Hospital has received several awards, larger or smaller.

The reaction of my family in this matter was revealing. Quint said I was a damned fool—and admired me excessively. He would have been willing to drive the car himself, but would just as soon have taken a cocktail before starting. My father respected my motives, but thought it was my duty to marry at once and leave children behind me. My mother set her lips and said nothing, because my father told her it was her duty to do so. The only one who made a real disturbance was Hortense, my fiancée, and what she said did not please me. She was told of father's remark by one of my sisters, and replied that she declined to offer herself as a sacrifice for the " Comet Model X." It wasn't enough to have children; she wanted a husband also, and if I was going to commit suicide, she would prefer it was before marriage.

That was within her rights; but she went on to argue that I had no right to degrade the Faber family by taking part in a public competition with chauffeurs and mechanics and professional sporting men. It may have been that my displeasure at this was excessive; but I have my own notions about the Faber family, and how to protect its good name. When I conform to social conventions, it is because I choose to, and not because I am afraid of what somebody else will think.

V

I HAVE given a picture of myself and my surroundings; and Dr. Michaels thinks I should narrate in detail the events which happened in the two days and nights preceding my accident. That will show what was in my consciousness, and served as building material for my " hallucination," or " dream," or whatever you choose to call it.

The " Rivertown classic " comes off on the afternoon of the Fourth of July. It had been my practice to take the event seriously, and follow a careful *régime*. On the days preceding it I would eat lightly, and go to bed early, and try to keep my mind free from every sort of strain. But as fate willed it, the days and nights on this occasion were among the most crowded of my life. There was the strike, and the raid upon the " reds," and the killing of Jerry Fields; I was rushed most of the days, and got very little sleep at night, and it may well be that this unsteadied my hand and eye, and was responsible for the smash-up.

The strike had begun the previous week, in the knitting-mills at Green Falls, four miles above the city. The occasion was a reduction in wages, made necessary by the cut-throat competition our manufacturers are meeting from the Southern states. Seven hundred workers were out, most of them women, and their leaders were making a desperate effort to persuade the workers of the worsted mills in the city to join them. Also there was unrest among the ship-workers, for the industry has been depressed ever since the war, and their wage has had

to be deflated. There is an element among the workers which seeks to use every wage dispute as a chance to spread sedition; the reds apparently have flying squads of trouble-makers, who come from New York and other centres, ready to take advantage of every local disturbance.

My attitude towards my own workers has always been liberal. They are for the most part skilled men, and I pay them good wages—enough to make sure that I have taken no profit in the first five years of the business. I know all of them by name, and they know me; they are used to seeing me in the plant almost every day, and that I think is the most essential thing—the personal contact, the realization on the part of the workers that the master has his mind on the job, and is giving as good as he demands. I have gone farther, and tried to keep in touch with the home life and problems of the help. I have a welfare worker in the plant, a young chap who grew up in St. Thomas's Church with me; he turns in a report every month, and I assure you it is not filed away unread. If I have not carried out all of Vinny's idealistic proposals, it is because other items have to take precedence—taxes, and interests on bonds, and bills for raw materials, and a weekly pay-roll of some eighteen thousand dollars.

Needless to say, I have not let any labour unions get into the Comet Motor Works; that is one form of Vinny's idealism which he has stopped putting into his reports, realizing that it is of no use. Either I am going to run my business, or quit, and take my self-respect with me. What unionization means, I know all about through my cousin, Chet, who is an executive in a machine industry not far away. He comes to our house steaming like a tea-kettle on a hot stove; the walking delegate has been in to see him, and put his feet on his desk, and

taken one of his cigars and puffed the smoke into his face, and told him what the workers are to have, and what the delegate is to have. I say to my men that they get their own share, plus the delegate's.

That has meant, I am sorry to say, another " welfare worker " in my plant, not quite so idealistic as young Vinny; a representative of the Sheridan Agency. Hardly a month passes that we don't learn of some new kind of trouble-maker among our men. There is, it appears, a little nucleus calling itself the " Auto Workers' Union "; there are the " wobblies," and several kinds of communists, and God knows how many species of anarchists and syndicalists and socialists, with hybrids and mixtures of every shade. But it is a case of " all coons look alike to me," and I have a system that has never failed. Their work in the shop is found unsatisfactory, and presently they are out in the shed unloading ingots. It is a heavy task, and they begin kicking to the boss because there should be more men in their gang. Nobody is ever fired on account of his politics.

Here again I have wrangles with Quint, whose idea of " liberalism " is to let these agitators get in and organize our men, and drill them into a fighting army to take our plants away from us. That is what they mean to do, and all the fine language and fancy labels are mere camouflage. We have seen the programme worked out in Russia, and how any employer in his senses can fail to realize it is a thing which passes my understanding. I said in November, 1917, that every man and every dollar in America should be pledged to exterminate Bolshevism, and I did everything that one young fellow could do to push that programme. I even got a leave of absence and went to Washington to see my grandfather, the senator, about it. He explained that it couldn't be done, because

all the allied armies were eaten into by sedition—the war had lasted too long. So the job still waits; and meantime I have this job for mine—to see that there is no red poison in my plant, nor in my city so far as I have power to control it.

VI

On the afternoon of Saturday, July 2nd, there was a conference of the manufacturers of Rivertown with representatives of the Sheridans and another detective agency we were employing. The reports tallied; there was every likelihood of a strike in the worsted mills, and the ship-workers would surely go out if the agitation were permitted to continue. Present at the session was our mayor, Julius, and the talking-to that I gave him that afternoon was something that Rivertown inner circles still remember.

I have to explain Bobbie Julius, otherwise you will not understand my action in taking the law into my own hands. Bobbie is a graduate of Rivertown College; he was six years ahead of my class, which ought to entitle him to precedence, but he has forfeited it by being one of the most pitiable weaklings it has been my misfortune to know. I had a phrase by which I described my dealings with him; it was "moulding water." He will promise anything, if you push him hard enough, and then he will promise the opposite to the other side.

I think he is a Jew, though I can't prove it. What I can prove is that he is a nobody, an upstart, with no sort

of claim upon our citizens. He is a shrewd politician, and has been tireless in shoving himself into the limelight. Every day it becomes harder to get responsible business men to take the unwelcome burden of public life, and so the offices fall to the lot of professionals, for whom politics is a career and a means of enrichment. Bobbie aspires to be governor, and thinks he can avoid displeasing anybody by a sufficiently bold course of inaction.

That is what I said to him at our session in the Union Club, with most of the business leaders of Rivertown listening. Did he think he was going to become governor without our money? Maybe he thought he could get the votes without money, by truckling to the union labour element. If so, let him realize that our memories would last until the next campaign; I was having minutes of this meeting taken, in case anybody's memory should weaken. I pointed to my stenographer, and Bobbie looked at her, and turned pink. He had kissed her at a gay party, so Quint assures me, and perhaps that was what embarrassed him!

What did our eminent statesman do, as a result of that dressing-down? It appeared that he had a date to go fishing over the Fourth, and he kept it! Leaving our city threatened with a big strike, and the reds holding a secret conference, to plan a demonstration for the holiday, with red flags and seditious banners marching down our main street, and stones coming through the windows of the Union Club, as happened ten or fifteen years ago under similar circumstances! It is easy to see what Bobbie had in mind; he knew we were going to take some action, and wanted to be in a position to repudiate us if we went too far. Riding two horses at once—and the horses going in opposite directions!

I went from the Union Club to the plant, and called

Rufe Hanna to my office. Rufe was one of my drill sergeants in the army, and now is one of our shop-foremen. He is what is called a " character," and could make his fortune on any vaudeville stage; with fiery red hair, and enough freckles to fill a pepper-pot, and the sort of laugh that starts a crowd off automatically. But he can be grim when necessary, as the rookies well knew, and the reds found out in this and other troubles. Rufe is one of the active spirits in our local post of the Legion, and knows our politics from the point of view of the pool-rooms and police. It is a depressing picture he gives, and he and the rest of our fellows don't need much urging to step in and clean things up. I told him to get together a dozen of our most trusted members at his home that evening. We have our system of spreading word, and not many fail us.

VII

I HAD an engagement for dinner with Virginia; which brings in another aspect of my life. I would prefer to leave it out, but Dr. Michaels insists that the story would be meaningless without it. These modern psychologists all seem to place an enormous amount of importance upon sexual matters. It is the fashion nowadays to talk such things out—you can hear at dinner in the homes of our best people discussion of matters which in the old days the men would have referred to only in the smoking-room, and the ladies would never have heard of at all. It is hard on the old folks, and a few of them won't stand it—my stern old grandfather among them. He will break in with

the remark, " We had best put this off until the ladies have retired." And you can bet that nothing more is said!

It goes without saying that an active and full-blooded man like myself is not going to reach the age of twenty-seven in the rôle of an anchorite. I tried to keep my " affair " as decent as possible, and I don't exaggerate in saying that it was as decent as any I know of. Virginia Tully was the wife of one of my men overseas; a very intelligent girl, having been through high school, and with the manners of a lady. Her husband came back from the war pretty much demoralized, and drinking; he abused his young wife, and she left him, and being completely stranded, came to me for help. I do not believe in divorce, but the modern world will have its way, and I am powerless to prevent it. I got a lawyer friend to take Virginia's case, and I helped to set up a little millinery shop, in the back of which she has lived for the past five or six years.

Our relationship grew out of her gratitude and loneliness. I won't say that my conscience has approved of it altogether; it does not fit into my ideal, yet it is hard to see just what else I could have done. Virginia has become desperately fond of me, and it has been largely on her account that I have put off marriage for so long.

All the time, of course, there has been pressure from my family, who have been disappointed in my brother, and look to me to carry on the name and tradition. Three times my mother picked out a wife for me from the annual crop of débutantes of our city and others, and each time I failed to develop the expected enthusiasm. My devoted parent could not comprehend—and I, of course, could not explain to her. Perhaps some of her women friends did so, I cannot tell. The story is well known among the men, and I suppose in the course of time has leaked to the ladies. If this so-called " modern frankness " goes

much further, I may be prepared to have them refer to it in my presence.

At the time of which I am writing I had come to realize that I had to make a decision. My mother had very tactfully brought forward Hortense Manley, and I had proposed, and been accepted. I was just trying to get up the heart to tell Virginia. Not that I feared any trouble, but I hated so to make her unhappy. I hand it to her as a game sport that she had never hinted at the idea of marriage with me. There are plenty of women in her position who would have done so; I have known them to make demands and threaten scandals. But Virginia knows Rivertown very well, and has sense enough to realize how little cordiality she would find among our " smart set." Her mother was a school teacher and her father a printer; and our crowd is fiercely snobbish, I am sorry to report. Aside from questions of social position, there is the divorce, which would loom like a mountain in the path. We could not be married in St. Thomas's, and anything else would break my mother's heart.

Virginia's " shoppe " is not in a fashionable neighbourhood; she caters quite cheerfully to an obscure middle-class trade. In back is a little ground-floor apartment of two rooms and bath, with one of those cubby-holes which the landlords call a " kitchenette." Tiny as it is, it made possible some rare culinary feats. Virginia's mother named her daughter after her native state, where they set great store by cooking.

Also, the little lady has that precious gift called " taste " : an intuition which enables a woman to take a couple of rooms in the back part of a lodging-house and turn it into a bower of charm. I doubt if she spent a hundred dollars on that home. She might have asked me for

money, but instead she wandered about in second-hand shops, and picked up a stick of furniture here and there, mending some of it with her own hands. For the most part it is a matter of colours, a little kalsomining, and draperies selected to match. Virginia is of the brunette type, sensitive, rather pale, and content to stay as nature makes her, without the elaborate painting which women now find necessary. You would call her features elegant, until she smiles, when you notice that her mouth is twisted. But one overlooks such a defect in a gentle and affectionate nature.

VIII

THERE was a smell of roast duck in the air when I arrived that evening, and I made appreciative sounds, according to my custom. When a woman has gone to trouble to please you, she likes to have you be aware of it. Virginia always fixes me up a little " snifter " before dinner; I bring her the makings, and it lasts a long time —I don't think she touches it except in my presence. I am glad of this, for if there is anything I cannot stand it is booze-fighting in women. From my experience, you find more of it among the country club crowd than you do among mistresses—at any rate, those of my friends who are busy and hard-working fellows.

Virginia and I would raise our glasses, and exchange a smile, and say a word of good luck for the " Comet," or whatever I was occupied with at the time. We have plenty to talk about, what with our interest in each other, and Virginia's interest in my business, and my stories

of politics and everything going on in Rivertown. I accuse her of being one of those tactful women who please a man by asking questions about his wonderful self; but even while I say it, I fall for the temptation, and find it pleasant to ramble on and on, and have my ideas appreciated and my opinions agreed with. How I do dislike an argumentative woman!

On this occasion we consumed raw oysters, and roast duck with apple sauce and celery, and some kind of a pudding of which I do not know the name. I appreciated it, having been blessed with a hearty appetite, and having been out on the track most of the morning with my mechanic, tuning up the car. While I lighted my cigar—Virginia is an old-fashioned woman, and does not smoke, I am glad to say—I began to explain to her that I could not spend the evening, on account of the meeting with the members of the Legion. She thought it was an evasion, and said: "You don't have to make excuses, Luke."

"Oh, but that's not so," I replied. "It has to do with the strike, and I'll tell you about it."

"All right," said she. "But before you begin, there's something I ought to have out with you. I want you to know that I know you're engaged."

So there it was! "Of course, you find out everything, Jinny."

"Everything about you, Luke. I want you to know right away, I'm going to do everything I can to make you happy—now, as always."

"That's like you, dear," I said.

Of course I can't repeat these conversations word for word, but the substance was that she realized the pressure the family was putting on me, and that sooner or later I'd have to obey them.

" I really don't belong to myself," I pleaded. " There's a family line, and a lot of property, and I'm merely an appendage of a sort. Don't let it hurt you too much."

" No, dear," she said—and did not shed a tear. But there are signs of emotion that I have learned to know; her eyelids have a way of fluttering like a butterfly's wing; and in the midst of that crooked smile, you notice the lips trembling also. " I've always known I'd have to let you go, Luke; so there's been a strain of grief in the music of my life. But now I find it easier—because I know you'll come back to me."

" What put that into your head? " I asked, somewhat startled.

" I won't tell you; but you'll come."

" Don't cherish that idea," I protested. " It wouldn't be fair to yourself."

" It's all my risk." She smiled that wise woman's smile.

" What is your idea? "

" I just mean, you'll get married respectably, to please your family, and you'll have your three or four nice healthy children to carry on the Faber name and inherit the property; but you won't be satisfied, and you'll remember me, and finally you'll realize that there's no reason why you shouldn't come back and be happy."

" But there *will* be a reason, dear! It wouldn't be fair to my wife."

" You think so now, but in time you'll realize that she has got what she's entitled to—the name, and the children, and the social position."

" Why do you feel that way about her? "

" I don't want to talk about it. It's an intuition."

But I knew there was more to it. " Have you been asking somebody about Hortense? "

She smiled gently. " I haven't needed to, Luke. She came to see me last week."

I nearly jumped out of my chair. " Hortense came? "

" Don't be frightened. It was simple enough. She came to buy a hat."

" Oh! "

" A perfectly respectable visit. But of course what she really wanted was to see what sort of woman you had been loving."

" My God! " I thought. I am continually being startled by this modern world. Hortense, whom I had imagined so demure, so easily shocked that I could never breathe a hint of my " past "!

" Are you sure that was it, Jinny? "

" Be sure I can tell whether a woman is looking at a hat or at the hatter. And besides, she asked if I was Mrs. Tully. I tried not to disgrace you, Luke. I mean, I behaved as respectably as I knew how."

" What do you think of her, Jinny? "

It was one time when no art could overcome feminine stubbornness. " You ask *her* what she thinks of *me*, Luke! "

But, of course, as I drove on my way I realized Virginia had already told me what she thought. I would come back to her!

IX

I WAS late for my appointment with the Legion fellows, and they were waiting, crowded into Rufus Hanna's little combination of living-room and dining-room. They had

been using the time to cook up a conspiracy against me, as I was to learn.

Naturally, I have considerable prestige with this bunch. It isn't because I am an officer, for we have a dozen or more in our "Hubert Wilton Greaves Post." Nor is it because I am rich. Money doesn't count for so much as you might think—not unless you know how to use it. Family counts for more, but the main thing is vigour of personality. To these husky young fellows the manufacturing of racing cars is a decidedly honourable occupation. They all feel pride in the achievements of the Comet Model X, and think of my plant as a place where they can come for a job if they get hard pushed. The fact that I do my own racing may not make a hit with my family, or with the parishioners of St. Thomas's, but it sure makes me king-pin in an American Legion post!

I find these ex-army contacts of the greatest benefit to me. Fashionable society has a tendency to become stagnant; either your crowd is drinking cocktails and mixing up husbands and wives, or else it's a chain-gang, stepping with exact precision through a social round that bores you to tears. But here I meet men of every class who are doing real work, and afford me an inside view of everything in our city and county. In this group before me was an oyster-fisherman just out of his boat, and a structural steel-worker who had spent the day battling with treacherous winds, with no footing but narrow girders, two hundred feet in the air; an air-taxi driver who will take you to New York in an hour and a half in any weather at your own risk; a young chemist who blew up himself and a part of his laboratory not so long ago; a local billiard champion; a light-weight boxer; the most conscientious bootlegger I have had occasion to deal with; a bank-clerk who once gave me some important

information, enabling me to stop a crooked deal; and three fellows who work in my own plant, and help me to understand my labour problems.

These very different types of men are bound together by one common sentiment; they risked their lives to put down the greatest threat to Americanism which has so far appeared in the world. It was the job we call "canning the Kaiser," and we're not apt to forget it. For reminders, in the midst of money-chasing and pleasure, we have several buddies who come with an armless sleeve or a peg-leg; one has to be led in, totally blind, and three others write us letters from Government hospitals which they will leave only for the cemetery. Having made such sacrifices for our country, we are not likely to turn it over to a bunch of foreign rats who sneaked in while the watchmen at the gates were asleep.

Greetings were exchanged, and then Rufe spoke up, with one of his cheerful grins. "Chief, we've got an idea what's up, and we're game for whatever you say. But there's one condition we're going to lay down for you."

"What's that?"

"You've got to keep out of it."

"What's the matter with me?"

"In the first place, there's the race. We want you to be fit."

"Thanks, fellows, but I don't think we'll have any serious trouble with these Bolshies."

"Well, you can't tell, and we just think the place for you is snoozing in bed."

"What other reason?"

"We've figured it out, the bastards might have grounds for damage suits against us."

"They won't get very far with any jury in this county."

" Yes, Chief, but they might get it tried somewhere else; there's a lot of tricks in the law, and they might find some shyster that would make trouble for you. If it's guys like us, we can laugh at them, because we ain't got nothin' but our pants. So what you do is sit on the side-lines, and if any of us gets into trouble, you can bail us out."

" I'll do that, anyhow," I said. I thought it over, and then added: " I'll compromise with you; I'll go along, but not take any active part."

" You can trust us to do them up good," said Billy Pike, our local celebrity in scrapping.

" You may do too much," I replied; and I went on to explain the situation. There was to be a conference of the local reds, together with the outside agitators, in a room of the Jewish Clothing Workers on East Washington Street at eight o'clock the following evening. A Fourth of July meeting in Central Square had been advertised, and the purpose of the reds was to use it for communist work; they would display incendiary banners, and end up with a parade to the City Hall, in defiance of the police.

I explained what these tactics meant; being very careful in phrasing it, since several of this crowd were labouring men. I pointed out how this agitation had nothing to do with the question of the right to organize and demand higher wages. I took no sides in the issue raised by the strike; maybe the spinners at the Green Falls plant ought not to have a wage-cut, and certainly they had a right to refuse to work if they chose to. But these reds were different; they were not interested in wages or hours, nor even in unions, except as they could use them to make trouble. The reds were out to destroy the United States Government, and everything they did was for the

purpose of rousing the mob and preparing an insurrection. We had made, or been ready to make, every sacrifice to preserve our Constitution from outside danger, and now we faced this menace at home.

" That's all right, Luke," put in Billy Pike, " we know all about them bastards. We'll give them a good workout."

" If we beat them up," I said, " we make a nasty stink in the papers, here and all over, and bring a new bunch of trouble-makers in. What we have to do is make clear that Rivertown is a place that is closed to them. We propose to take along a dozen cars and load all the outside agitators, and take them out into the country and start them on their way, making plain what they'll get if they come back."

" Can't we give them a good swift kick in the pants? " This was Rufe Hanna, very plaintive.

" A kick in the pants won't show," I said; " but there mustn't be any beatings, and if anybody isn't willing to work on those terms, he's the one to go home to bed."

" Suppose one of 'em draws a gun? " queried Elkins, the aviator.

" If that happens, you boys have a chance to get some arms free of charge. It'll be a fine state of affairs if trained men like us can't handle a bunch of kikes and long-haired poets from Greenwich Village."

" What about the cops? " asked " Butch " Wilkins, the bootlegger, who naturally has to consider that aspect of life.

" You'll be in the right sort of company for once," I said, and the rest of the crowd laughed. Of course I wasn't trusting this rotten city administration, I explained, and the county authorities were not much better. Our brave mayor was going fishing, and Johnny O'Connell,

our chief of police, would be playing poker in his office. We would present the politicians with an accomplished fact, and let them make what they could of it. If there were cops at the hall, they would no doubt look the other way, for they knew our crowd, and three of our fellows had deputy sheriff's badges, which I had helped to get in previous emergencies of this sort. We had the same sort of trouble back in 1919 and '20, so it wasn't new to us. Americans are used to taking matters into their own hands when their liberties are imperilled; the lessons of the Boston tea-party having not yet been forgotten.

X

Some friend of Hortense was giving a dinner dance at the country club that evening. I had declined an invitation, being in training for the race, but had promised Hortense to look in for a few minutes. Driving out to the club, my thoughts went back to Virginia and our recent conversation. What did Virginia really think of Hortense? What did I think of her myself? No human being is perfect, and I must expect faults in my betrothed; but somehow they seemed to loom especially prominent in my mind that evening.

I did not go upon the dance floor, not being dressed; but Hortense came out to me, and we strolled into the garden, and sat on one of the lover's benches in the moonlight. It was a warm evening, perfectly still; the soft perfume which Hortense used mingled with the scent of roses and honeysuckle, and the whole world was made

of sweetness. She had a filmy shawl thrown about her shoulders, and I sat looking at her as she talked, thinking there could be nobody lovelier. Hortense Manley is what you call a perfect blonde, and I have the feeling—it may be only race prejudice, but I cannot help it—that I trust the fair-skinned types more than I do the dark. I knew that I could count upon this girl; her soul was clarity itself.

Yet, even while I thought thus, I was remembering: she had been to Virginia Tully's " hat-shoppe," and hadn't told me anything about it, and didn't intend to tell me! Oh, the little rascal! How much does she know, and what thoughts are hidden behind that smooth, fair forehead? How well do I really know her—or any other woman, for that matter? No doubt she has the same uncertainty about a man, and has an excuse for wanting to investigate my past. I was not blaming her, but was amused by the discovery that she was not quite so unenterprising and submissive as I had imagined.

What was the basis of my doubts about Hortense? She would be a perfect mother of beautiful children. I had spoken to her about that—it was one aspect of our relationship which could not be evaded. My family wanted children, and I wanted them, and Hortense had agreed that she wanted them too. She was well bred and well taught, and would agree with me about their upbringing; in all such ways she was exactly what I sought. But even before Virginia had spoken a word to me, I had found myself thinking: is she not just a little colourless, a little more conventional and anxious than a great lady has to be? As time passes, won't I find myself bored with her?

Now that it is all over, Dr. Michaels points out to me what I was doing: I was unconsciously judging my

fiancée by my mother. A stately woman, firm and grave, able to manage a large household without a moment's anxiety; able to pacify the disputes between Quint and myself, to temper the edge of my sisters' teasing—in short, to be in our home a statue of dignity and serenity. I wanted my future bride to be all of that, and at the same time I wanted her to defer to me, and study out ways to make me happy, as my mother did for my somewhat exacting and impatient father. Yes, I was making heavy demands upon poor, gentle little Hortense!

She was only twenty, and had not seen very much of life. She had been delicately reared and cared for, and given everything she wanted; it was a proof of her sweetness of nature that efforts to spoil her had so completely failed. She loved me truly, and tried to please me—but with no understanding of the real difficulties. When I touched my lips to her cheek, I was unconsciously thinking about Virginia, who was five or six years older, and had suffered and struggled. Virginia had been endowed with temperament; there were fires smouldering in her, ready to leap into blaze, and I had felt that heat, I had learned to savour that acrid smoke. I suppose strictly puritanical persons would consider that I had been corrupted; but somehow I cannot bring myself to feel that way about it. Dr. Michaels is sure that what I really wanted was to have Virginia for the mother of my children; but fear of my family, respect for their religious and social prejudices, would not permit me to acknowledge that idea to myself.

XI

ANYHOW, there I sat in the garden of the country club, with the sweet odours of paradise about me, and moonlight, soft and supposed to be romantic, glorifying the scene. My betrothed was making a desperate effort to save my life, but I was critical of her eloquence, and not much moved by her appeals. It seems that she had had some kind of dream about me; one of those premonitions which help to explain the origin of superstitions. At least, that is the way I felt about it that evening; since then, I have been set to wondering, as you will understand when you have heard the rest of the story.

Hortense wanted her lover and her husband, and didn't see why I should not care more about her than about the reputation of the Comet Model X, or even the prestige of Luke Faber among sportsmen and newspaper writers and salesmen of motor-cars. She wanted me to drop out of the race, and let the car be driven by my head mechanic, who was crazy to do it, and as competent as I. Why couldn't I behave like other men of my class; taking a dignified attitude to my business, and the vulgar crowd that hung on to it and got their livings from it? When a gentleman had something to sell, he hired agents to attend to it, and he knew these persons for what they were, employees and social inferiors. That was true in every kind of sport; the amateurs did not invite the professionals to their homes or their clubs, or welcome them as intimates. But I, Luke Faber, persisted in going down into the arena, and rubbing elbows with jockeys—they really were that, the same type of men who had used to ride horses which gentlemen bred and raced.

So long as Hortense was pleading for herself—telling of her love for me, and her wish to keep me, and her dreams about accident and death—to that I could not help but respond kindly. But when she got to discussing what was socially permissible for a Faber of Rivertown—well, really, I could not help thinking that she was out of her element. Hortense's mother is a Fairweather, of the Philadelphia stock, and there is no better blood in America; but her father's father is a self-made man, who started a hardware manufacturing plant—the rumours have it that he even began with a retail store.

I don't mention this from snobbery, for I have always laughed at my sisters when they tried to argue that a daughter of the Manleys was not good enough for their wonderful brother. I mention it merely for the light it throws on Hortense's own attitude. There is a certain timidity about her, an excessive desire to conform, which you find in a person who is uncertain about social position, and which would never occur to one who feels secure. The Manleys do as they fear, while the Fabers do as they please.

Naturally, I wouldn't give up the race, to which I had publicly pledged myself. I wouldn't announce that I was sick, for I wasn't the least bit sick, and everybody knew it. I told my betrothed, politely but not very warmly, that when she accepted me she had known of my evil love of speed; she had even known that I was an entry in the " Rivertown classic." In answer to her question whether I meant to go on after this race, I replied it would be a waste of time to discuss the matter, since she was so firmly convinced that I was going to be killed. That was pretty severe, I have to admit, but I have a sort of mulish streak in my nature, and I defend it, because it seems to me that sternness is necessary to the making of

character in a harsh and hostile world. Even though I wear a white collar and a tailor-made suit, I keep the attitude of a fighting man.

The upshot was, Hortense told me she would not continue our engagement if I meant to remain a jockey. I answered that the race was only about thirty-six hours off, and the sensible thing would be for me to go home and get some sleep, and put off solving problems until the strain was over. So we parted; I delivered her into the arms of a dancing partner, and the perfume of her scent-bottle and of the country club garden faded from my senses.

XII

The family is accustomed to spend the summer months at our shore place; but I stayed that night in the town house, which is on Hill Drive, our fine residence avenue on the heights to the north, overlooking the river. I had been careful to get home early, but as it turned out I might as well have been dancing with Hortense, since I had too many problems on my mind. My sleeping porch was flooded with light from the same moon which had watched us in the garden, and I was still going over the argument, and thinking troublesome thoughts. Was she really the right woman for my wife? Would she be equal to her station as matron of the Faber family, my assistant in directing it?

I am aware that all this may sound egotistical; my brother has seen to it that I understand the so-called

modern point of view. But there is a difference between those who take marriage as a sacrament—" for better or for worse, till death do us part "—and those to whom it means no more than a three months' sojourn in Reno, and one's picture in the yellow papers. It was up to me to consider every aspect of the problem, and to do my divorcing before marriage.

No doubt, part of my perplexity came from an uneasy feeling that Hortense might be right about the race. So many persons had been protesting, and I felt the opposition of my parents even more than if it had been put into words. Was I doing something rash and foolish, jeopardizing the future of a great and noble line? I don't mean to say that I was affected by Hortense's premonition; yet, when I stop and remember that I am playing the part of the Recording Angel—probably we all have a belief in premonitions and dreams rooted deeply in us, and something in my mind may have been responding to Hortense's terror, and keeping me awake and uneasy. My elder sister, Grace, is a firm believer in what is called the " occult "; she goes regularly to visit a woman who calls herself a clairvoyante, and you would be astonished to know what a crowded visiting list this person has, with many of our best names upon it.

Then, too, there was the question of Virginia, and the grief which I knew must be eating her heart. If she had made a fuss I should have been bored, no doubt; but the fact that she was playing the game according to the highest code—that impressed me greatly. There was nothing I could do about it, but that did not save me from dissatisfaction. My doubts about my fiancée set my fancy loose, and I lay thinking, suppose I should go back to Virginia, what would Hortense make of that, and what would be her rights in the matter? Manifestly, for a

devout member of St. Thomas's Church, it would not do. If that was all Hortense meant to me, I must realize it now, and break matters off.

Then, too, I had the problem of the following night. Suppose those crazy fanatics did put up resistance, what would be the outcome? How much responsibility would I find I had incurred? I am not of a worrying temperament, but I try to exercise judgment, which means something that might be mistaken for worrying—a careful canvassing of all the possibilities, in order to figure out the wise way of meeting them. I knew that I was right in stamping on those red snakes, but I had to bear in mind that the public did not know what I knew, and would be comparatively indifferent to its peril. Also, there are elements of disorder in our community, persons who hate the Fabers for one reason or another—crooked politicians, for example, who would be quick to take advantage of any blunder I might commit. To what extent would I be putting myself into the hands of enemies of our family?

You can see how many excuses I found for missing sleep. Suppose one of the reds drew a gun and got shot? Or suppose one of our fellows got shot? Could I expect to run from such an affair? Would my sense of honour permit me to keep out of it! Perhaps, after all, it would have been wiser to call upon Johnny O'Connell, our fat old chief of police, and prod him into action, and land those agitators in jail. But we knew from previous experience they are always ready with bail money, and can find some judge to let them out, even on a Sunday or a holiday. There they are, back on the soap-box again, more bitter and determined than ever—and with the prestige of having had their names on the front pages of the papers. No, you just can't do anything effective under

the forms of law; you have to go back to vigilant methods, the good old tradition of Americanism and individual initiative.

XIII

When I opened my eyes there was summer sunshine instead of moonlight. I had a quick shower and a rub-down, and a cup of coffee and a bite of toast, and got on my driving togs, and hopped into my roadster. Gus Valentine, my head mechanic, was waiting for me at the stadium with the Comet for a last tuning-up. I had hoped at that early hour on Sunday morning to escape the swarm of curiosity-seekers and newspapers reporters and photographers, but the hope was vain; the whole troop sighted me, and came on the run.

There is no use going in for a thing like this unless you play the game cheerfully, so I took my seat in the racing car and let them take my picture, with goggles and without. I told them what I thought about the prospects for the race—fair weather, twenty-seven entries, enormous crowds, and so on. I said what I thought about the various cars—being duly modest about the Comet, of course. I have learned how to deal with the newspaper boys, without any condescension, yet keeping my dignity; they appreciate this, and give me a generous deal. Publicity distresses my parents, but I remind them that I have to live in the world as it is, and if I should go into politics, as they take for granted, all this will be practice, and none of it thrown away.

You must have some idea what this " classic " means

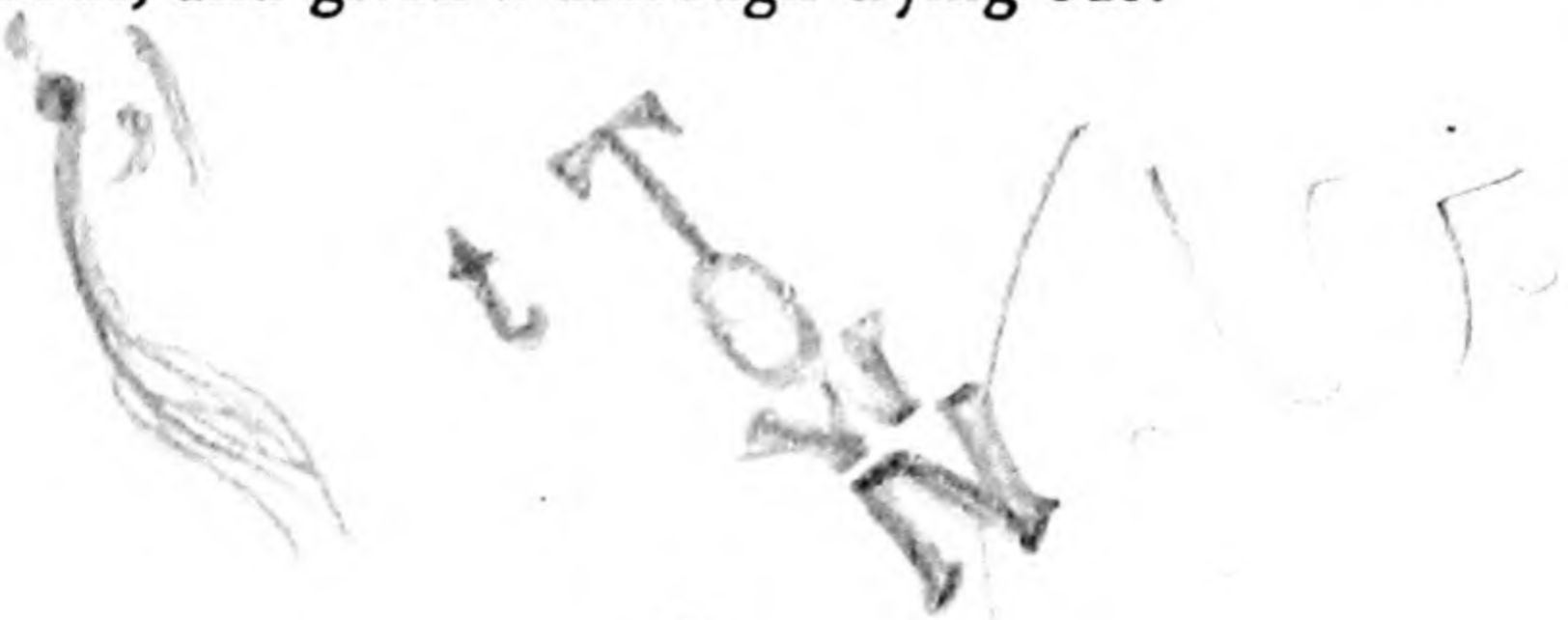
to our city. That Sunday there will be a stream of cars pouring in, and the hotels will be putting up guests on billiard-tables and roofs, and even in servants' quarters. Our chamber of commerce has a list of every nook and cranny in town where people can be boarded, and everything is filled, even to the barns on the outskirts. People want to see, not merely the big race, but the tuning-up of the cars, which goes on all day Saturday and Sunday. It would seem that they are happy just to be in the neighbourhood where a great event is impending; they come, in limousines and battered Fords, and camp by the roadside if they cannot find indoor space. Our streets are crowded, and venders of hot dogs and soda pop call my name blessed —another thing which will be useful in the days when I am seeking votes! I don't mean that I thought of such things when I first put up these prizes. No, it is the truth, I wasn't even thinking of advertising the Comet, but just of having some fun. However, the practical considerations have been useful in reconciling my family to so noisy and vulgar an affair.

The Comet is a stripped racing car, built especially for speed. It is a straight eight, with front drive, and has the maximum engine capacity, 91½ cubic inches, which the American racing rules allow. We have been able to get as high as 195 miles an hour out of it on occasions—but not on the Rivertown track, needless to say. It is the special thrill of our race that the cars are capable of much higher speeds than track conditions make advisable, so there is always the temptation for some dare-devil to hit it up and run away from the field. The crowd knows this, and expects it to happen, and when it does, they are lifted out of their seats. To come roaring around our "broad saucer," and swing round the turn, almost in a horizontal position—that takes the fastest adjustment of

hand and brain of anything which human beings attempt, and when I figure the fractions of inches and seconds involved in the steering operation, I never cease to marvel that men are able to achieve it. I know of nothing that will tell so quickly one's physical and nervous condition; if the report is unfavourable, he will be wise to get off the track!

My own report was satisfactory, so I made some forty circuits—the track being a measured half-mile. There were two other cars out at the time, and I didn't try to pass them, but made sure they weren't passing me. You would have to be a " fan " for that particular kind of thrill to understand what I tell. Let this suffice—that nothing I have ever experienced in any other aspect of life has been able to equal the climax of a motor race. The Faber family should appreciate the sacrifice I have made in giving it up!

I dropped behind, and put on the brakes, and ran my Comet off the track where Gus was waiting. He had another mechanic with him, and their orders were to take the car to our plant, and stay with it, and stay awake, day and night, until the last heat of the race had been run. I wouldn't say that any of my rivals were capable of dirty work, but none of us were taking chances, and it wasn't enough to lock the car up in our own building. Gus has been with me ever since the war—the place where loyalties were made, and given a thorough trying out!



XIV

I DROVE home, and dressed again, and was ready to accompany my mother and father to the morning service at St. Thomas's. It is the one family duty they exact, and nothing interferes except illness or absence from home. Our place at the shore is only fifteen miles away, so the family motors in for Sunday service. My father is one of the vestrymen of the church, and mother is head of St. Agnes's Guild, which attends to our charitable activities.

Quint was at home, and was going also. In spite of all sophistication the young man has picked up in the world's great centres of infidelity, he cannot bring himself to wound his parents by staying away from divine service. He takes out upon me his pent-up scorn for the Rev. Dr. Featherway, our rector; of course he couldn't fail to think of the witticism of adding a " t " to the name. From long listening, my brother has learned every smallest detail of the old gentleman's Oxford accent, and I must admit it is funny to hear him preach an imitation sermon. Even father has to laugh, though he cuts it short.

I was waiting on the porch for our younger sister, Amy, when Quint joined me, looking very festive in white flannels—too much so for church, according to my taste. He is darker than I, equally tall, but thinner; his face is prematurely wrinkled, betraying his troubled, uneasy spirit. I think his impulse to dispute me is due to the fact that he is weaker than I, and also that our parents have been more satisfied with my ways. He was grumbling over a wasted morning—he might have been playing golf. Another complaint—the country was suffering from

drought, and our bishop had ordered prayers for rain in the churches, and what an insult to the intelligence of civilized, golf-playing Americans! This was aimed at me, because I still cling to the notion that the Protestant Episcopal Church may have some useful function to perform in America.

" For God's sake, cut out the humbug, Luke! " My brother is inconsistent in making use of a Supreme Being for rhetorical purposes. " Do you believe old Feather-weight can add a featherweight to the rainfall, or don't you! "

" I think there's a lot we don't understand about this universe yet——"

" There you go, old sophist! You ought to have been a bishop yourself! Because we don't know all the causes of rain, we can go on pretending that the droning of an insect in a black and white gown may affect sunspots and atmospheric pressure! Do you think maybe God is bored with the old cricket's prayers, and wants to get home to dinner, as I do? "

I generally keep my temper. " I've tried to explain to you, Quint, why I consider that we need a church."

" So many reasons why it's good for us to be hypocrites, and pretend to believe what we don't! You have as many evasions in your head as that English cleric—what's his name, Jowett—who would say the creed by slipping in under his breath the words ' do not ' when he said ' I believe.' "

" I say exactly what I believe, my dear brother."

" It seems to me you pare it down every time we talk. You don't believe in Moses in the bulrushes, and you don't believe in Jonah and the whale. But you pretend to believe in a personal devil, though you never think of him or speak of him except in church. You believe in a man

who didn't have any father, and is one-third of a three-headed God who sits on a throne, though you call yourself a republican, and don't recognize royalty."

" Really, Quint, Amy is coming."

" Let Amy take care of herself—I doubt if she's as big a fool as her brother! "

Dr. Michaels asks me what is the real reason I attend St. Thomas's, and would I continue to do so if my mother and father were no longer here. I don't know much about theology, and am content to leave it to the rector. What I think is that the church is a means of keeping the family together, and lending dignity and meaning to family life. The old ceremonies are beautiful and inspiring to me, they stir feelings which otherwise I would never know, and certainly would never be able to express. They have behind them a tradition, the accretion of millions of minds and hearts. I shall teach the Bible stories and the hymns to my children, and we shall have family prayers, morning and night, in the good old style. This will be a means of holding the children to me, as it has held me to my parents.

I ask Quint what will he teach his daughter and his stepdaughter? He answers, he will teach them common sense and straight thinking. Maybe so; but fate has played a queer trick upon my smart young agnostic. That lovely widow whom he married apparently did not find common sense and straight thinking enough, and has taken up with theosophy—or rather, so she insists upon explaining, with a new and purified form of the faith, bringing back the true spirituality of Buddhism. There are many cults which attempt to do this. and Camilla subscribes to the newest, and bows down before a fat-bellied bronze image every time she hears a temple bell, and has Hindi or Sanskrit words intoned over her by a brown saint in a

yellow robe and red turban. I ask Quint if he likes the sound of Vishnayaparandayana any better than he does Featherweight; and this is a hard blow, because poor Quint suspects his wife of a more than religious interest in her saint, and she is now spending the summer in New York, in order to be near his retreat.

You would be surprised to know the extent to which these Eastern creeds are making headway in our country. They come from all ports between Arabia and Japan. There are office buildings in our cities, with rooms and halls given up to the worship of strange gods, and the women experience pious thrills in the presence of swamis and prophets of Vishnu and Gautama, Zoroaster and Abbas Effendi and Krishnamurti. It is one of the signs of our intellectual and social decay.

XV

St. Thomas's Episcopal Church of Rivertown occupies a peculiar position in summer. So many of its parishioners have their country places within comfortable motoring distance that they don't mind coming in for the morning service. The rector and his assistants generally take their vacations in the neighbourhood, and if the day does not happen to be very hot, you may see a good part of the fashion of our city; the younger ones in outing costumes, like Quint, and the more conservative in broadcloth suits as if it were January. There is a pleasant social atmosphere about the church; you see the old friends you have met every Sunday since you were a child, and you exchange

greetings, and maybe a few words of gossip about the family, while you stand in the shade of the portico, with brownstone saints looking down on you, their heads covered with wire netting to keep off the disrespectful sparrows.

I am one of those who have to hurry in by the vestry entrance, and take off my coat and slip on a white surplice. The organ is already pealing, and the little white cherubs are being shepherded into line, pinching each other and dropping licorice lozenges down each other's necks. I say hello to the other choirmen, and bow politely to the rector and his assistant, who bring up the rear of the procession. I take my place by a college class-mate, who tells me the number of the hymn. Suddenly the doors into the church are thrown open, and the organ music swells to thunder, and two score voices are lifted in unison :

All glory, laud, and honour,
To Thee, Redeemer, King!
To whom the lips of children
Made sweet hosannas ring.

So we march out, and down the left aisle of the church, to the rear, and back through the centre aisle; first of all, the bearer of the golden jewelled cross, and then the little tots with their piccolo flute voices, and the larger boys, graded up to us men, who sing baritone, with four enormous bass voices roaring behind: all of us carrying open books in front of our stomachs, but not looking at them, because we know by heart this old marching chant of our faith. I find the scene very pleasant, but my description is touched with the mockery of my brother, who never tires of laughing at me for becoming inspired with singing in a church choir. If I could only see how absurd I look with my mouth so wide open! I remind

him that I got my instructions from the best singing teacher in our city; and I am not there to be looked at, but to be listened to. Quint demands to know why, then, we don't sit behind a screen and sing. Why, unless we imagine we look pretty, do we go parading all over the place?

Out of the corner of my eye I see the family, filling our pew quite full: in the outside place my grandfather, the senator, white-haired but still erect; then his sister, my Great-aunt Delia; then my father, with his hair beginning to grey, and his figure a little too stout; my mother, with a purple cactus-blossom in her hat; then Quint, put under her wing for safe keeping, conspicuous in his white costume, and with his hair not in order, as usual; on the insid.. our two sisters, Grace, very devoted and good, and Amy, gay but innocent. That is our family, the cynosure of all eyes here; I feel myself a part of them, and of this noble organization which binds us together, embodying and expressing our faith. I am singing as I pass up the centre aisle:

The company of angels
Are praising Thee on high;
And mortal men, and all things
Created, make reply.

Such is the meaning of St. Thomas's to us; and presently our elderly rector takes his place in the pulpit to renew our fervour. His hands are beginning to tremble, and his voice to falter, but his sense of his mission is still strong, and persons like my mother and father, who have known and loved him the greater part of their lives, are still able to find pleasure in his familiar thoughts. He speaks on the subject of the peace move-

ments now getting so much space in the newspapers. As a shepherd of Christ he feels himself compelled to say a good word for them, I suppose; but I am pleased to note that he is not blind to the need of preparedness, and makes clear that we can count upon the aid of the God of Battles in our righteous cause, whatever it may be.

He refers to our enemies without and within, and the men of affairs of our city know only too well what he means. We have read in the paper that morning the news of the ferment among the strikers, and we know of the mass meeting that is scheduled for the public square to-morrow afternoon, and the efforts that will be made to fan the discontent into flame. Directly across the aisle from my grandfather sits Clarence Calvin, with his rosy, bald head—the vigorous president of our chamber of commerce, who yesterday sent a telegram to the governor asking for a company of the state militia to protect property in Green Falls. If that call is answered, a score of men in the church will be in uniform before night.

No, it isn't the best day for a pacifist sermon; but my younger brother says that no doubt the rector wrote it during the pacifist movements which were so active and powerful in the year 1913 and the first half of 1914. Such is Quint's idea of being witty.

XVI

Our family has Sunday dinner in the old-fashioned style, at two-thirty, so that the servants may have the evening off, to go to church if they so desire. I told

my mother I would be late, as I had an appointment at Rufe Hanna's home—something to do with the strike, I said, but not going into details, as it would only have caused worry.

Clarence Calvin, as head of our chamber of commerce, was keeping track of the reds and their doings in Rivertown. In fact, it is a hobby of his, he has been running a sort of unofficial bureau for the past ten years; the reds are trying to punish him by calling his pottery workers to come out on strike. It was Calvin who 'phoned me, suggesting that the situation called for action by the American Legion; he had offered to send me one of his "under cover agents," a fellow who was posing as one of the reds, and secretly selling them out. I didn't want such a person coming to my home, of course, so I had suggested that Rufe should receive the report.

It was dinner-hour in the Hanna home, and the wife and kids were eating what I judged to be boiled cabbage in the kitchen, while we three men had our secret session in the living-room. I had never met a spy before—at least, not that I knew of—and I experienced some little curiosity, and a trace of boyish thrill. Weiss—that was the name the fellow went under—seemed to have been especially designed by nature for the rôle of dangerous red. He was lean and hungry-looking, with black, greasy hair around his ears and collar, and restless, uneasy eyes, and a complexion that took on a greenish tinge in the shadows. He had been a real red, I was told, had quarrelled with some of the leaders over a slight, real or fancied, and now was selling them out to us for five dollars a day. A thoroughly unlovely creature, compounded of jealousy and vanity; with a touch of the "ham" actor, who would aspire to play

Shakespeare, and be mortally offended when he was judged unworthy.

Why did we have to deal with such human dregs? I confess it was most repugnant to me. My ideals are those of a fighting man, and I prefer to meet my enemy in the open. But when he skulks in darkness, you have to seek him where he is. It was our plan to deport the outside agitators; and how could we do it unless we knew who they were? Manifestly, we could not drive out persons who had their homes in Rivertown—at least, not until we had further educated public sentiment. If we laid hold of *bona fide* strikers, we would only rouse sympathy on their behalf, we would wake the class-consciousness of various kinds of workers. Our thesis was that the outsiders were the enemy; so, manifestly, we had to have a way to pick them out from the crowd. They would hardly answer to a roll-call.

Weiss was supposed to be reporting to Rufe, and I was merely a friend, so I sat and listened while my red-headed shop-foreman, with a stub of pencil in his big fist, wrote down the strange-sounding names, and the details of appearance of the conspirators who were trying to destroy our city. Lehtimaki, a yellow-haired Finn—or are they all black?—I can't remember now. He had led the red revolt in Finland in 1919 or thereabouts, and had been up against a firing squad and left for dead; now he was the agent of Moscow in a new movement of mass agitation, and was in Rivertown for the purpose of demonstrating some special technique, of which to-morrow's meeting and parade were features. And Gianbattista, Italian anarchist terrorist, who had served a long term in prison, and was now a communist convert, and assistant to the Finn. Jerry Fields, lumber-jack from the west, a " wobbly " who had done a term

for criminal syndicalism in California; and Mabel Somebody—I can't recall all the names—the head of a so-called workers' relief organization, which is a device whereby the reds are enabled to outwit the laws against them. They form various societies for education, feeding children, legal defence, " civil liberties "—and such organizations can work in the open, in spite of laws. Rufe Hanna gave me a look now and then, as much as to say: " We'll show 'em! "

XVII

I LISTENED, and thought my thoughts about this situation. What was the state of America, when such enemies could come into our country, and in spite of deportation and sedition and criminal syndicalism laws, could open up offices, and keep bank accounts, and receive funds from abroad, for the undermining of private property and all our institutions? No use to scold at our well-to-do classes, so busy making money and having a good time with dinner-dances at the country clubs! No use to scold at our Quints, the smart young " Liberals," with their witticisms and graces, like the shine of phosphorus on decaying sea-food! No, we have to sit in dignified silence, and watch the fair structure of America undermined and brought down to the dust!

It is what I predicted to my grandfather nearly ten years ago, when I went to see him in Washington and urge upon him that the civilized nations should combine to wage war upon the Bolsheviks. The armies wouldn't

hold up, he said: there had been a mutiny in the French fleet in the Black Sea; British troops, taking ship at Folkestone for Archangel, had refused to go; there had even been a mutiny in the American army in Northern Russia, the first in our history. And now here I saw the result! The Soviet Government was "succeeding," and what did that "success" mean? A centre of labour revolt, firmly entrenched, sending out emissaries to every nation and tribe of the earth, to incite insurrection and terror; providing them with funds, and means of propaganda, a technique of sedition—exactly like sending airplanes to drop incendiary bombs upon our cities, or to scatter bacteria of cholera and typhus!

Here I sat where the bombs were falling; I saw the infections taking root. Meetings in obscure labour halls, with hundreds of ignorant foreign workers sitting spell-bound, listening while the Lehtimakis and the Gianbattistas told them that the masters of American industry cared nothing for the welfare of their "wage-slaves," but thought only of profits, and repression of liberty; expounding the new programme of "expropriation of the expropriators," the seizure of our factories and banks and Government by revolutionary trade unions. This is the message now being fanned to flame in our social depths, and we sit on the crater of the volcano in peaceful contemplation of the lovely landscape.

The voice of Weiss was muttering on, and Rufe was writing strange foreign names with his heavy fist. Weiss was so eager to help us, to devise ways whereby the dangerous ones could be pointed out without bringing suspicion upon himself. Such a willing spy, so competent and courteous—and for only five dollars a day! Yet, I could not help thinking, he had been a real red not so long ago, and the bitterness of class hate was in the deeps

of him. What could such a creature, bred in a slum, and poisoned with his mother's milk, have in common with a man like myself? What conception could he form of my purposes, the uses I plan to make of the power I hold in society? No, in his heart he must hate me; the only hold I have over him is that I have the money which he needs. And any day when I cease to subsidize him, he will go back to his rat company. Indeed, how can I be sure he may not be selling us now? Why may not the reds have spies among us, as we have among them?

The thing that makes a red-blooded American angry, is to realize that the defence of his country and its institutions has to depend upon secrecy and lying. How could I waken America, how bring about a revival of national vigour? We ought to have a wholesale cleaning out of these foreign rats, and ship them back where they came from—or else stand them up before a firing squad. If I have my way, we'll save the severest punishment for those traitors to our institutions who lend encouragement to the enemy in the name of " free speech " and " civil liberty " and what you will; comfortable ladies and gentlemen who derive incomes from our industry, and use them to purchase combustibles to burn it down.

This sounds violent, I know. Yet, I am really a peace-loving man; I had just come from St. Thomas's, and had the mood of that beautiful service in my heart. The truth is, I was aching for that dream of the America which might have been, and could never be. If only we had kept this fair land for our own kind of people, who are capable of self-government, and could have founded a state of a sober and God-fearing character. We might not have grown so fast; we might have had to get along without so many cheap cars clogging our highways, and hot dog and soda pop stands, and five-and-ten-cent stores piled with

junk. But we could have had plenty of good substantial products, such as our forefathers got along with, and we could have had some dignity and grace in our lives. I thought of the gentle folk I had greeted at church, the lovely women and self-contained men; then I looked at this slum rat with the green complexion and greasy hair around his ears, and listened to his story of sinister agitators with unspellable names, and mass meetings swarming with embittered workers. My heart ached for my country, and its future, so dark and storm-threatened.

XVIII

I DROVE to Thalassa, our shore place, arriving just as the family was sitting down to dinner. A goodly company—you will rarely find a Sunday when less than a score of persons share our feast. Kinsmen come to visit us, for periods long or short; company drops in without warning; the girls bring in automobile-loads or launch-loads—nothing troubles us, our table being kept in the old American style, an abundance and then double it. The modern fads of eating have not made inroads in our home; baled hay and spinach and lettuce leaves, fruit salads, whipped cream and fancy sauces, designed to make cellulose, air and water seem like food—we leave such diet for monkeys and squirrels and soda-fountain lizards.

The original homestead of the Faber family, where our ancestors lived for three or four generations, is located thirty miles in the interior. With wings and additions constantly added, it grew to be quite a mansion, but at present an impoverished cousin takes care of it, as it is

too far away for our needs. The thousand acres or more are conducted by my father as a model farm, his hobby and recreation. He raises everything which can be produced in our climate, and three times a week a small truck brings to our door enough food for a fair-sized hotel. That includes poultry and meat—no cold-storage stuff on our table, since the days when grandfather had to do with pure food legislation in Congress! We have our own oyster-beds—and no easy time keeping pirates off them. Other sea-food is obtained from the boats of the fishermen, the same morning it is caught. Ours is a fat land, favoured by nature, and we enjoy her bounties, and are free in expressing our gratitude.

Some say we eat too much, but our family is hearty, and seems to thrive. We have a fish and two roasts on Sunday, and they are served separately, and always passed twice—grandfather insists on it. I can remember the time when he used to do the carving himself, in the old patriarchal style; it wasn't until his wife died, and my mother took charge of the household, that we knew the revolutionary custom of having the carving done at a side table. Now everything goes like clockwork, and you never hear a foot-fall of the men-servants; plates appear and disappear, and there is nothing to interrupt the conversation. But if you watch closely, you see my mother's quick eyes taking in everything that happens, and you realize that the ship has a captain.

Among the guests was my Uncle Martin Sylvester from the West, on one of his frequent business trips. It appears that the prairie banks are merging almost as fast as those of the industrial regions, and Uncle Martin's affairs are as much with Wall Street as with Nebraska. He resents this, because he is old-fashioned, still a countryman, in spite of having got into the big money game. His way

of thinking has been strongly coloured by the discontent of the middle-western farmers; he is sure there is something seriously wrong as regards our agriculture and the distribution of its products.

Perhaps I ought to explain that he is a grandson of one of those pioneers who went out to Kansas in the 'fifties, and took part in the struggle to make the territory a free state. Many of those emigrants were not so much land-settlers as crusaders; but they did very well, incidentally—those who were able to hold their land through the various panics and crises. The Sylvester family was one of the fortunate ones, and he always mentions that he only started his bank because one was needed in the town, and his neighbours picked him as a man they would trust; he really thinks there is something to apologize for in the business of money-lending. He quotes the Bible on the subject—being a strict Baptist, of the fundamental sort, and founder of a church school. He attends the plain and humble Baptist church in the village near our shore place, and shakes hands with the brothers and sisters, fishermen and carpenters after the Bible precedent, and then comes back to our home and appreciates enormously the shell-fish and sea-food which are to be had in Nebraska only out of cans and refrigerator cars.

XIX

Uncle Martin sat next to grandfather, and they talked politics while others at that end of the table listened respectfully. At the far end was mother, with Amy, and three

or four of her young crowd, which knows nothing about politics, and does not wish to learn. They were chattering about to-morrow's race, and no doubt expected me to take this as a compliment. I watch this younger set, which has grown up since the war, and confess to a sense of complete bafflement. What are we going to do with them? What will they do with the world when they get hold of it?

They are children of play. They have no responsibilities, and know nothing about work—why should they? I was going to say they don't know the cost of anything, but the better way to phrase it would be that they know the cost of everything except money. Machinery has multiplied life for them; they dash about in motor-cars over the land, and in speed-boats over the water, and in airplanes through the sky, and when they arrive it is for some other kind of game. They know nothing about suffering, and apparently have made up their minds not to learn. This aspect of them intrigues me, I admit; they take life as a sporting proposition, and whatever troubles they get into, they do not whimper. A swarm of bright, shining butterflies with armoured souls!

They laugh at everything, and there is nothing to do but join in, for the torrent of their gaiety is overwhelming, and if you try to stop it, you are bowled off your feet. They have a language all their own, with a new crop of slang every fortnight; if you don't understand it, " you should worry." If you start to argue, or to scold them, they have their own way of dealing with you—the " old troglodyte," or " hoatzin," whatever that may be. They start a gale of laughter, and presently they are dancing about you, shouting, singing; they start to rumple your hair, push up your coat collar, and turn your pockets inside out. Then off they rush, and leap into a car, half

a dozen inside and the rest hanging to running-boards or perched on the hood. Down the drive they go, singing a ribald song about " hot dogs," or maybe a " hot baby," or a " hot mamma."

I answered politely their questions about the Comet, but took no other part in the conversation. I couldn't adjust myself to their mood—no use to try. I was thinking about Weiss, and Lehtimaki, and Gianbattista. Suppose I were to describe these social portents—what would be the reaction here? Tremendous, I might be sure; everyone would be thrilled, and want to hop into the car right after dinner, and rush off to some place where the secret agents of Moscow might be observed at their deadly work. More fun than a Harold Lloyd picture, or Doug Fairbanks romping through history!

XX

THALASSA sits upon a rocky headland, looking over a fine sweep of bay. The water is deep blue beyond the shore, and pale green over the shallows, and in summer-time many pleasure-boats and fishing-skiffs glide over it. The place is very old, and has wonderful gardens, which people travel long distances to see; there are great old shade-trees, and enormous ivy vines, and box hedges with which our gardeners amuse themselves—they have developed an art of sculpture in green, and will cut bells and balls, and even heads of George Washington! There are fine rose-gardens, and greenhouses with tropical fruits.

The house has been rebuilt and enlarged, with a wide veranda, and white columns going up to the roof; in the afternoon the sun has got round to the back, and there is a breeze off the bay, making a delightful place for conversation. The ladies and the young folks gather at one end, and the men at the other for serious affairs.

My grandfather, the senator, is in his seventies, and his hands are beginning to tremble a little, but he still holds himself firmly erect. He is tall, spare, and wears a white moustache and sharply cut goatee, regardless of fashion. He holds the two arms of his chair with his hands, and turns his bright blue eyes from one speaker to the next. He is quick, and sharp as a spear-point when he speaks. If you know what you are talking about he listens without limit, but otherwise he stops you quickly. He is severe in his judgments, and somewhat domineering—a fighting man, who helped to rule a party for more than a generation, and will not give up power while he has breath. A gentleman of the old school; I do not know where we shall find another like him.

My father is not so forceful a man, and has been content to attend to his private business—though of late his friends have been persuading him to serve on one committee or another having to do with public affairs. It has not proved a good idea, for he worries over little things, the incompetence of official people and subordinates, and too many cares interfere with his recreation and his sleep. The doctors tell him he is letting himself get too stout; he frets over that, also, and makes illness for himself. There is a bit of Quint in him, as you can see; while I take more after my grandfather, and certainly in boyhood chose him as my ideal to worship. The senator, while tenacious of his views, will compromise, as he has learned to do in political life; whereas my father is an extreme

conservative, much worried about the direction our public affairs are taking.

So there is no meeting-ground between him and Martin Sylvester, who calls him hide-bound, and defends the right of revolution inside the Republican party. Uncle Martin is a square-built, solid man, with no nonsense about him. His face has been tanned by sun and wind, and his hands are big and strong from handling a plough; he still goes out into the harvest-fields and works, just to show the hired men they are no better than he. What we call a "rustic," with a certain amount of mockery—my uncle proclaims himself just that, and apologizes for his bank and his Wall Street affiliations. I suppose it is a good thing for Eastern capitalists and business men like my father to know what is really in the hearts and minds of the farming people of the wheat and corn country.

Uncle Martin is telling him now. The substance of it is that the farms of America are being depopulated; the one ambition of the young people, both men and women, is to get to the city and find any sort of job. No use to dispute the fact—the census shows it, decade after decade; we are becoming a nation of city-folk—an actual majority at the present time. What is the reason? Father says it is all due to the "movies"; the young people want the bright lights and excitements they read about. But my uncle says no, they could drive to town in the evenings; the trouble is that in the daytime, on the land, they can't earn a living. Father says they won't work as hard as they used to, but the other laughs at him; they go to Detroit and take a job "on the belt," the hardest work in the world. But afterwards they have money in their pockets; whereas on the farm, at the end of the year, they have a mortgage in Uncle Martin's bank.

No, he says, it is cheap wheat pouring in from Canada

and the Argentine; it is large scale methods of agriculture which put the small farmer on the shelf. The lack of working capital keeps him at a disadvantage, and when his mortgage comes due, the banks takes the land and rents it to a tenant, who is wasteful, and ruins the farm property in a few years. If the process continues, American agriculture is doomed.

Father has always been of the opinion that social evils correct themselves in time. But now he listens to a vigorous argument by my uncle, who declares that there is no greater delusion. Look at the civilizations of the past and what happened to them! Nature's way of correcting evils is to destroy whole nations and empires, and let barbarians come in. The same thing is happening here by peaceful invasion; our farming industry is being taken over by Portuguese and Italians and Mexicans and Filipinos and Japs, who have a lower standard of living. It spells the doom of America, insists my country relative; a dismal prospect.

XXI

THERE is an element inside the ruling party—and my grandfather is among them—who are ready to tackle the problem of agricultural discontent if anyone can point out a way that is not a form of public charity. The one evil with which the senator will make no compromise is paternalism. Let men stand on their own feet, as their forefathers did, and not come whining to the Government. Now he argues with Uncle Martin, who declares that we manufacturers of the East have had all the Government

aid we wanted, in the form of a tariff. Why should not the farmers have a turn?

You will see this brings us pretty close to the position of the so-called "Progressives." We find it hard to discuss this movement politely, even in the bosom of the family, for the reason that father regards the Western movement as a disguised form of socialism, or even of anarchism. He has never forgiven it for the split of 1912, which turned the country over to the democrats, who to him are still the party of "rum, Romanism and rebellion." Father sees a sharply-drawn conflict over the issue of property rights, a war between the haves and the have-nots, going on incessantly in our society. When he was a young man, first taking an interest in public affairs, he had to fight the free silver movement, which was, in substance, an attempt to cut the wealth of the creditor class in half, and distribute it among the debtors. Such, he declares, is always the purpose of the "rebels," even when they themselves are not aware of it.

What the farmers want is to take the prosperity of the manufacturers and business men, and "divide it up"; so father reiterates, and the so-called "Progressive" senators are willing to wreck the party of law and order for that purpose. Father put up something over a quarter of a million dollars to help keep LaFollette from the presidency, and now that the old war-horse is dead, he watches suspiciously for the arrival of a new leader to replace him. He suspects that it will be one or the other of LaFollette's two sons: having heard that they have a mother who brought them up in these evil ways, and now eggs them on. "The mother of the Gracchi!" says my grandfather, with his dry smile.

The senator now interposes in the argument. The farm problem is a live issue, and must be solved. He

tells father, with what amounts to a rebuke, that it is the business of a statesman to understand his opponents' position. The very thing that Uncle Martin speaks about has been going on in our own neighbourhood for a couple of generations, but we have failed to realize the significance of it. Take our own estate—Faberlands, as we call it. It is now something over two square miles, and how did it grow? By a continual process of absorbing small farms. Somebody would die, and the heirs would decide to sell; another would get into debt, and be forced out; and always a Faber was there with the money in his hand.

"We paid the market price," says my father; "and we earned the money honestly."

"Of course," replies the other, "but the fact remains that we have dispossessed a small owner, and turned a farmer into a town-dweller."

"It wouldn't have happened if he hadn't been inefficient. I am running the place scientifically, using the best machinery, and taking real care of the land."

"No doubt of that. No doubt you have increased the total yield. But the men who do the work are servants and wage-earners, and not free citizens, of the sort who founded our republic." Grandfather quotes those lines from "The Deserted Village," which I am told are in all school readers:

Princes and lords may flourish or may fade;
A breath can make them, as a breath has made;
But a bold peasantry, their country's pride,
When once destroyed, can never be supplied.

XXII

I DO not want to bore you with politics and business, but if you are to understand what comes later, it is necessary that you should know what sort of men were these three wise elders of mine, and what attitude they took towards public affairs. I am giving you merely a sketch of our talk. It drifted to another menace which troubles the governing classes of our country, the crime wave. Every sort of crime is increasing, especially those against property, and it appears to be organized, amounting to a war upon society. Sooner or later we shall have to wake up and root it out—especially the crooked politicians and police, who are in great part responsible. Thus my father, impatient and drastic as usual.

Grandfather spoke more calmly. He thought it was due to the war. You can observe that wars are always followed by periods of disorganization. There is an element among soldiers which does not settle down quickly to the pursuits of peace. It is hard to find jobs for them all; and they see that those who stayed at home have been making money, and getting the best places. That naturally makes the war veterans embittered; they rail at the speculators and the rich, and join the radicals. What, after all, is the difference between a radical and a criminal, except that the former relies upon organization?

Father thought it was not so much the war as prohibition; the imbecile effort to force upon people ways of life which were dictated by bigotry and prejudice. The outlawing of liquor had drawn thousands into crime——

Said my grandfather, laughing: "It seems to me it has drawn them out of it. They can make so much more at bootlegging, it no longer pays to steal."

Uncle Martin is an ardent prohibitionist, and gives as much money to promote the cause as father gives to oppose it. Now they went at it hammer and tongs, with grandfather trying to pull them apart now and then, but in vain; for this is the subject which destroys all other conversation in America. You know the arguments, pro and con, so there is no need to summarize them. I agreed with my father that it is absurd to try to forbid a gentleman to serve wine at his dinner-table; but as an employer of labour I could not help putting in an oar for my uncle's side; it certainly represents a vast gain that we have been able to make liquor too expensive for the working classes. The "blue Monday" was something remembered by all employers, and I could recall the sights of drunkenness which as a youth I had seen in Rivertown on Saturday nights.

Uncle Martin expressed his conviction that the great prosperity which America now enjoys, above all other nations of the world, is due entirely to prohibition. Our people are putting their money into savings-banks, and into automobiles and radio-sets——

"Bought on the instalment plan!" put in my father, irritably.

"Well, it means that they have to work, and keep working," said my uncle.

I agreed with this. Men who have valuable goods at stake do not listen readily to agitators. I think the new method of instalment selling is one of the strongest holds we have upon labour. It gives the workers a share in the country. Free air and free water for their cars, free ether for their music in the evenings—and plenty of

advertising to make them spend their money, and keep prosperity going!

I said this, and then rose to go. I had an appointment in town, and could not stop even to solve the problems of crime and liquor. All three of my elders rose and bade me a formal farewell, which they would not have done if it had not been for the coming motor-car race. Uncle Martin wished me luck, in his dry, abrupt way. Father said: "Remember, son, we need you more than you need the prize." That was all his code permitted him to say; I must be allowed to live my own life in my own way. But I knew quite well what he was thinking, and it made the occasion rather solemn.

I went to the other end of the porch, where the young people had no such reticence. "We'll all be there, old dear, to pick up the pieces!" Such is modern youth.

My mother walked with me to the steps, her hand in my arm, and I felt a current of affection and anxiety. Dear, kind mother; so soft and warm, as I remember her from childhood, so gentle and calm, as I know her now —yet dependable and strong! I think I owe more to her than to any other one person.

She was wearing a grey silk dress with half sleeves, and skirts not too short. The modern fashions do not trouble her; she keeps her own conservative way, and lets others do what they please, giving advice only when it is asked. She is three or four inches shorter than I, and a trifle plump, just enough to appear grave and matronly. She wears few jewels, and never makes any sort of show; things are taken for granted with her, and do not have to be spoken. I cannot stand chattering, noisy women—it is one of the reasons why I stay among men.

The smile mother usually wears was absent at this

moment. "Remember, Luke dear," she said, "if anything should happen to you, I have lost nearly all my future."

"Mother," I said, "the reports of racing accidents make a great show in the papers, but as a matter of statistics, I have as much chance of being hurt on the way to the track as after I am on it."

"I don't want you to be hurt in either place," she said; and I gave her a hug, and ran down the steps. I knew her thought, that we might be parting for the last time, so I threw her a kiss as I stepped into my roadster. After all, it is no new thing in the world for mothers to see their sons go away to danger.

XXIII

THERE is an enormous lot of hard work involved in the putting through of an event such as the "Rivertown classic." But on account of the part I was taking in the race, I did not let the administrative problems trouble me. A committee of automobile men handle the event, and each year I lend them Claude Winters, a young executive of my company, as a sort of general manager. As this was Claude's fifth year at the job, he knew more about it than the committee, and I had every confidence in his judgment. But he wanted to do me the honour to confer as to his final arrangements, so I had told him to meet me at the town house late that Sunday afternoon.

I listened to his outline of plans and prospects, and made one or two suggestions. Then he told me a bit

of news; in passing Central Square he had noticed a crowd and stopped to watch it.. Some of the reds had been trying to hold a meeting, presumably without a permit, a surprise move. The police had broken them up, and there had been quite a scrimmage—Claude had heard some thumping, and shouts and screams, and seen the patrol wagon come, and cart off several men and women. We talked for a while about the strike situation; he had picked up a bit of gossip here and there, and was greatly stirred up about the agents of Stalin and their efforts to make trouble in our city. Of course I said nothing to him about our plans for the night; we had all pledged ourselves to silence, and I had taken the pledge seriously, telling not even my parents.

Right after Claude left, the 'phone rang, and there was Clarence Calvin, wanting to let me know what had happened at the square. I amused myself by pretending omniscience, and telling him more than he knew. He added an interesting item, that Jerry Fields, the " wobbly," was urging a move on the churches; the unemployed, and those strikers who had been evicted from their homes, were to take possession of at least one church building.

" To rob it? " I asked.

" No," said the president of our chamber of commerce, " but as a place of shelter. They don't really need shelter, of course; they just want to put the clergy in a hole."

" In a hole? " I was rather dense about it.

" Well, they mean it for propaganda, to point out that the churches are not really Christian."

" Hell! " I said—for that kind of sentimentality makes me ill. " What's Christianity got to do with sheltering a lot of bums? "

" Well, they tried it in New York before the war, and

it made a great fuss in the papers. It's a form of tactics, to make things harder for the police."

"Forget it, man!" I said. "You take these gutter-rats too seriously. We'll throw them out on their heads, and the papers'll make a joke of it."

I was laughing as I hung up the receiver. I could see the round, rosy face and bald, rosy top of Calvin, as I had passed them in the aisle of the church that morning. He has prominent eyes, and when he gets to telling about the radicals, these eyes seem about ready to leave his face. He owns a big pottery works, and dreams of the red terror at night; if six hoboes were to steal into St. Thomas's to sleep, he would see the pottery-workers' soviet seizing the State arsenal.

XXIV

I HAD promised my Uncle Cornelius, the professor of Latin, to drop in at his home for supper. He had laid stress upon it, because a distinguished French historian was to be his guest. You will understand that to a college town there come in the course of the year many interesting visitors, and my uncle is one of the men they seek out; he often invites me—having the same idea as Quint, I suppose, that I am "provincial," and need contacts with the outside world. Or possibly he thinks his guests will be interested to inspect an American of the old school—I cannot be sure, and my quiet and tactful relative gives no hint.

The visitor was there when I arrived; a man of sixty, I should judge, with grey hair and many wrinkles, but dapper and very elegant, with the elaborate manners which

all these foreigners have; he spoke English with more precision and care than we natives trouble to take. Professor Polibe was his name; I had never heard of him before, but my uncle told me that he was the author of a monumental history of the American revolutionary war. It struck me as queer that a Frenchman should wish to write on our affairs, but my uncle pointed out that it had been a French affair also. I could see immediately how the professor would take the opportunity to prove that it was his country which had won the war and founded the American Republic! He would glorify LaFayette, and point out the decisive influence of the French subsidy, and the fleet of the Comte d'Estaing!

Now here was this immaculate elderly gentleman with the most exquisite grace setting out to make me the vehicle of an apology to the great American people. It appeared that back in the days of our war with Spain, before I was born, he had taken the side of his Latin neighbours, moved thereto by a sense of racial solidarity. " I was very young then," he explained, " and impetuous, and I did not know much about your great and noble country." I could understand that—it being a characteristic of many of the foreigners who come to Rivertown, and go away to write up our smoky factories and greed for profits.

It seems that the professor, in his ardour on behalf of his Latin brothers, had gone to the extreme of some overt action, which had been the subject of representations on the part of our embassy in Paris. The professor assumed that I heard about it, and I was too polite to tell him otherwise. Now, of course, the World War, and our magnificent performance in France, had cancelled all that in his mind, and his elaborate history of our early years had been his method of atoning for the wrong he had done us. He was tremendously in earnest in all this, and dramatic, even

melodramatic, in telling it to me. I knew that he was doing me an honour, and was as polite as I knew how; but I could not help my thoughts—I cannot endure these foreigners, with their emotionalism, their gestures and *tremolo* stops in the voice.

We went in to a light supper in my uncle's dining-room; a simple place, but charming, with a silver service that was brought from England before the war of which Professor Polibe had written, and some furniture that would bring record prices in a New York auction room. We talked about the European situation, and here our guest was more interesting, but even less pleasing to me. You know how the French are, unconscious egotism walking in trousers. Everything is France; the continent of Europe has been cut up and rearranged to guarantee French safety, and the two great historic wrongs which Americans committed are, first, the effort to be paid back the money we loaned, and second, the refusal to pledge our national income for all time to the keeping of France in control of Europe, Northern Africa and Western Asia.

Dr. Michaels thinks that this visit to my uncle's home had much to do with my " hallucination," which now lay less than eighteen hours in the future. So perhaps I should point out that history has always produced a profound impression upon me. I have had old things about me, family homesteads and portraits and keepsakes and records; and even as a very young child I would be swept by the thought: " Things come, and then they go, all of a sudden! What becomes of them when they aren't here? " The result would be an eerie feeling, a sense of insubstantiality; I would think: " By and by this will be history! " I would think: " What will it be like then? "

Now there was this meeting with Professor Polibe, and we talk about the American Revolution, and the Spanish-

American War, and the World War. There was my Uncle Cornelius, who was Roman history dressed in modern clothes. There were two rows of pictures of ancient Roman buildings in his front hall—the Forum, the Colosseum, and the Arch of Trajan, at Ancona, the Pantheon, the Baths of Caracalla, and the Temple of Fortuna Virilis—all of which swept past my eyes as I entered the house, and again as I left. No doubt all these things played their part in my strange aberration, which was soon to begin. I remember having the thought—a frequent one with me—of my admiration for the Romans, because of their solid qualities. I am accustomed to say that they were the Americans of ancient days.

XXV

I LEFT my uncle's home at seven-forty, being scheduled to arrive in front of the Jewish Clothing Workers' Hall on East Washington Street exactly on the minute of eight o'clock. I had allowed ten minutes' margin, on the chance of a flat tire or engine trouble; so now I had to drive round the block several times. I was amused to note how many other cars were circling that block, in one direction or the other; a surprising increase in motor traffic in an obscure working-class quarter! In spite of the gathering darkness, I could recognize members of our Legion crowd.

We had set our watches together, and the job was put through with the precision of a football play. At one minute before eight the cars turned in to places at the kerb, and the riders sprang out, and two squads converged

upon the hall, twenty-five men, each with a stout club or piece of gas-pipe in his hand. A couple of loungers at the entrance saw us coming, and ran inside. Instantly our bunch broke into a charge; we piled in at the doorway, and up the stairs—the meeting-place being on the second floor. Several ran around to cover the rear entrance, and two stayed to watch the alley and the windows.

I mounted the stairs at a more dignified pace; not being one of the raiders, but merely a casual spectator, stopping by. I heard screams of women and shouts of men, and when I entered the meeting-place, the entire crowd was on its feet, backed away to the far end, and still backing; some looking for a getaway, others, with fists clenched, glaring at the invaders.

Rufe Hanna was in charge, and gave his orders in sharp military style. "We're not going to hurt anybody. If you live in Rivertown, all you've got to do is to get out of this hall and go home. The ones we want are the outsiders, that don't belong here. And we want them quick."

The ex-sergeant advanced as he spoke, studying the faces in front of him: our mill-workers, for the most part people of a type, we learn to recognize at a glance; foreigners, dark of hair and pale of face, several inches short of the normal, with stooped shoulders, and not too sturdy. The women out-number the men in the mills, and there were many here; some of them screaming and wailing—quite a clamour. I observed that men of this class, when they are frightened, assume a greenish hue, like that of Weiss.

The spy was in the crowd, and I followed the little play we had arranged. He would push his way among them, and stand behind one of the men we wanted, not saying anything; Rufe, in the midst of giving his orders, would make due note. I recognized the I.W.W. lumberjack, the only giant in the crowd. He stood in front, challeng-

ing us, his big frame hunched and his fists clenched, ready for a gouging and kicking contest; evidently he had been in one before, as he had two front teeth missing.

" You Jerry Fields? " demanded Rufe.

The answer was a snarl.

" Step over here."

" Who says it? "

" You hear who's saying it. You're coming, dead or alive, so you might as well save yourself a broken head."

" What are you going to do with me? "

" We're going to take you out of this town, where you don't belong; if you come back again, we're going to beat you till you can't stand up. Come, now—move! "

There was a pause. Then : " Go fetch him, boys."

Billy Pike and two other fellows advanced, and you could see the lumberjack measuring the length and striking power of eighteen-inch pieces of gas-pipe. When they got close, " Oh, all right," he said, and stepped forward. Two of our bunch ran their hands over him quickly, making sure he had no weapon.

" Lehtimaki! " said Rufe. " Step out here! "

The Finn saw that he was spotted, and came; a short stocky fellow, with wire black hair, if I remember correctly. I was struck by the sinister faces of all these agitators; grim, lowering looks, as it were black smoke from fires of hate. I realized that we weren't doing anything to make them love us; but we were not the aggressors, it was they who had come to make trouble in our homes.

" Gianbattista! " called Rufe.

Two of our lads grabbed the Italian anarchist; a dark fellow, stoop-shouldered, with sharp little moustaches. One could have known him by the prison pallor, which is never lost, it seems.

We searched them all, but found no weapons bigger than a pocket-knife. It is obvious why they don't go armed on these agitation raids—they are playing for public sympathy, the innocent lambs. I wished I could have got a photograph of that line-up, and put it into the newspapers, to let our people see the character of desperadoes who come here seeking to incite our labour. It would have been worth thousands of dollars to the organization which Clarence Calvin maintains for combatting seditious propaganda.

XXVI

THERE were eight persons we wanted, and we got seven. I was watching Weiss, and saw him shake his head, apparently indicating that the " Mabel " woman was not there. So Rufe gave his final orders to the crowd. " The rest of you stay where you are till we get downstairs. Then you clear out of this hall—we'll leave a few men to see that you do it. Go to your homes and stay there, and remember, if we catch you mixing up with these reds again, we'll run you out of town for good, homes or no homes. We're going to have law and order in Rivertown, and no mistake about it."

He turned to our captives. " Downstairs with you, quick! "

So far everything had gone smoothly. But at this moment a woman stepped out of the crowd. I had already noted her; she did not seem to belong here, and I had wondered about her: a woman in her early twenties,

tall, rather pale, with finely-cut, sensitive features. I flatter myself that I know a well-bred face when I see one, and this girl made me think of a blooded race-horse. An Anglo-Saxon with straight nose and blue eyes and light brown hair—what was she doing among wops and hunkies and kikes and Finns and what-nots!

She spoke to Rufe, in clear, challenging voice. " Where are you taking those people? "

" Hey? " said Rufe. " What you got to do with it? "

" It happens they are friends of mine."

" Who are you? " I suppose my red-headed foreman was thinking she might be the Mabel Somebody he wanted.

" I am a citizen of Rivertown," she replied, " and I demand to know by what authority——"

" You stay right here and demand, ma'am," said Rufe with a laugh. " All right, boys, we're off."

There was a commotion in the doorway, and we saw the blue uniform of a policeman pushing in. The girl spied him, and cried loudly: " Officer, we demand protection from these people! " Others took up the cry; there was a babel of shouts, and women yelling out of windows: " Help! Help! Murder! "

Rufe sprang to block off the girl, and Billy Pike spoke to the cop. What he said I couldn't hear; no doubt he knew the man, and others of our fellows gave him the high sign. Anyhow, he took himself downstairs, and nobody saw him again. Rufe prevented the girl from getting near enough to get his number. We left her protesting and demanding, while the seven prisoners were marched out, each with a strong buddy gripping him by the right arm, and another by the left.

I descended the stairs, and watched them loading up the prisoners. There was a driver sitting in each car, with the engines going, everything according to schedule.

There was only one scrimmage; the burly Jerry was shoved into a car, and promptly leaped out on the other side. " Butch " Wilkins, my bootlegger, was watching for him, and brought down his club—a good clean whack, that rang out on the still night air. The lumberjack collapsed, and was bundled into the car.

I don't know how that girl got downstairs. I suppose our men had started to clear the hall too quickly. Anyhow, there she was, storming at Rufe, demanding and threatening and having to be shoved aside. She tried to climb into the car with Lehtimaki, then she tried to get into another one. She was frantic, no doubt thinking we were going to beat the rascals up—as, of course, they well deserved. My guess was that she must have a sweetheart among them.

Rufe, in the front car, gave half a dozen toots of the horn and started away; the others fell in, and off they went. The girl came running to where I was in the act of stepping into my car.

" Oh, I must save those men! "

" What do you expect to do? " I asked.

" Take me after them! Please, please! "

I didn't know whether she had seen me in the crowd, or took me for a mere spectator. Doubtless she noted that I was a gentleman. " What can you do? " I insisted.

" I want to follow them! I want to do what I can! Oh, please! " She didn't wait for an answer, but opened the door of my car and sprang into the seat at my side. " Drive! Drive! " she cried in a voice of anguish. I was amused by the situation, and thought: " Why not? " So I drove.

G. L. Bangs

XXVII

THE flying cavalcade went down Washington Street, which leads into the suburbs, and at last runs into River Boulevard. There was a lot of traffic, it being Sunday and the night before the " classic," but we kept up a good pace. The woman sat at my side, motionless, but breathing fast, and now and then giving what seemed an involuntary shudder.

" Do you know those kidnappers? " she demanded suddenly.

" I have seen some of them before," I replied, with strict truthfulness.

" Who are they? "

" I doubt if they care to reveal their identity."

" Are you one of them? "

" I am myself," I replied.

" Who are you? "

" The same as you, a citizen of Rivertown."

" You *are* one of them! But you're somebody too important to admit it! "

I saw that I was dealing with a capable mind, so I stood on my " importance." We came to the bridge over the river, and the first four cars turned and crossed, while the last three went on. I had known they would do this, and been amused by the prospect. Now I stopped. " Which way do you want to go, ma'am? " I inquired, like a dutiful chauffeur.

" Are they going to different places? "

" It rather looks that way, doesn't it? "

" Go across the bridge," she ordered.

On the other side of the bridge the two front cars went up the hill, while the latter pair turned up the river. I stopped again. " Which way? "

She replied: " Take the river road." Then she asked: " What are they going to do with those men? "

" You heard what the leader said. They are running them out of town."

" Are they going to beat them? "

" Not unless they resist."

" You mean they're going to turn them loose in the country? "

" You are surprised at their moderation, apparently."

" It seems so perfectly silly! They'll all be back in the city before morning."

" That's up to them. I think the idea is to give them a warning. If they disregard it, they are to blame for what happens."

" So these young ruffians constitute themselves the government of Rivertown, and secede from the rest of the United States! "

I had no chance to answer, for the speeding cars ahead of us had come to another fork in the road, and the forward car took the one leading into the hills, while the second car went straight on. Again I slowed up, and said: " Which way? "

" Go on up the river," said the girl. There was disgust in her tone, for she saw that I was playing with her.

The car ahead must have observed that it was being followed, and having no means of knowing who was the pursuer, began to hit up the pace. However, I don't let anybody leave me behind in a car. To my passenger I remarked: " If I get tagged for speeding will you pay the fine? " She scorned to reply; and after an interval

I went on: "If you get thrown through the windshield and ruin your beauty, I want it understood that I am not financially responsible."

We swung round a turn on two wheels, and I heard a little gasp. Said my passenger: "If you assure me they aren't going to torture those men, I'll agree to quit."

"Thank you very much," I said dryly. "If you promise not to betray my confidence, I will give you the assurance."

"All right," she responded. Her voice was cold; she was not grateful. There are few men who can endure being laughed at, and no women at all, according to my observation.

I slowed up, and the car in front passed out of sight. We rolled along for a few minutes, until my "fare" demanded: "What are we doing now?"

"I suppose we're having a pleasure drive," I said. It was a lovely night, with full moon shining; the river view is fine, and the roadside was generously sprinkled with the cars of spooning couples.

"I am not accustomed to take pleasure drives with strange men," she said haughtily.

"Nor I with strange ladies. Let us remedy the trouble at once. I am Luke Faber. If you live in Rivertown, you know that I am respectable."

"Oh!" she said. There was a pause. I could not watch her face, and was sorry. "I suppose this means the end of my job," she remarked suddenly.

"Why?"

"I am a nurse at the Rivertown Hospital, which your family helps to support."

I said "Oh!" in my turn. "I didn't know they employed red nurses."

"They don't know it, either," she replied. "But of

course they were bound to find it out. And anyhow, I suppose I'll have my hands full nursing our own people after to-night."

XXVIII

We drove for a minute or two more, until suddenly I steered the car off the highway, and stopped and shut off the engine. I pressed the button which turned on the ceiling light, and turned deliberately, and stared into the face of my companion. I saw that I was not mistaken—she really was a person of refinement. In the overhead light her soft brown hair had golden glints, and her pale features had the fineness which we are used to seeing in old cameos.

"Look here!" I demanded. "What is a decent-looking young woman doing mixed up with a bunch of gutter-rats like those?"

She laughed, for the first time, and I saw two rows of even white teeth. I thought: "Why, this is a charming girl!"

Said she: "Is it your idea of a pleasure drive to discuss the philosophy of the social revolution?"

"But I want to know what hold these people have on you."

"I'm afraid you'll have to go on wanting," she replied. "One can't explain such matters to a troglodyte."

I admit that floored me. What the devil! My bewilderment showed in my face, and my passenger laughed again.

" Somebody has been spying in the Faber home! " she remarked.

I was trying to figure it out. Did she know Quint, by any chance? Or had she been employed by some friend?

Her laughter was pleasant while it lasted, but it faded quickly. " I don't want to joke with you," she said. " I really don't want to talk to you at all. You have committed a piece of cowardly brutality, and you haven't sense enough even to know it."

" If you're talking about those reds——"

" Be careful what you say, for I'm absolutely crimson."

" Well, we didn't hurt them."

" What are you talking about? Didn't you see one of your rowdies hit Jerry Fields over the head? "

" It was just a tap, to quiet him."

" A sample of your intelligence! He may be dying of concussion—you don't know, and you don't care. Your troglodyte skull is thick, and you think all others are the same."

" I'll wager that bully's is," I retorted, with cold fury —for, needless to say, I am not used to being talked to in that fashion.

" I don't want to bandy words with you," she said, no less angrily. " The man you hit over the head is a hero, and a little bit of a saint thrown in."

" Is he your sweetheart? "

" A lovely question! Perhaps you don't know he has a wife and two children? "

" Would that matter? "

I saw the pale face turning, first pink, and then scarlet.

" Oh, not a bit! " she said savagely. " We reds are all promiscuous, and live around any old way—just as if we belonged to the ultra-smart set of Rivertown! Do

you think I'm another Virginia Tully? Or maybe another Camilla Faber? "

My God! I clenched my hands; I came pretty near grabbing that vixen by the throat. And she glared back, giving me as good as I gave. Yet amid all that turmoil of mind, I am sure I noticed how lovely she was—a proud, defiant face, ablaze with contempt; sensitive features, the nostrils quivering, the eyes alight. She had meant to hurt me all she could, by that question about my brother's wife—and she had done it! I was madder than I had ever been in my life; and now, as I look back on it—with the sharp questioning of Dr. Michaels to help me—I realize that I was more impressed than I had ever been by any woman.

I managed to control myself, and said in a low voice: " I think you are abusing someone's confidence."

" Well, I won't abuse yours," she retorted, and started to get out of the car.

I couldn't allow that, of course. I caught her by the arm. " See here, young woman! You can't get out here."

" Why not? "

" It's not safe. It's a lonely place, and some ruffian might attack you."

" There seems to be a lot of ruffians out to-night! But I'm not afraid."

" Well, I am, and I'll not let you do it." I had her by the wrist, and discovered that this was what I wanted —to use force upon her. My grip tightened, and I pushed her into her seat.

She sat rigid. " Are you going to hold me against my will? "

" I brought you out into the country, and if you were found murdered, I'd be blamed. So I mean to take you

back to the city. After that, you may go your way. I think that's only decency to me."

She took a moment to think it over. "All right," she said. "You can take me back. But you needn't talk to me."

That was the crowning insult. I released her wrist, started the engine, and turned the car. I began to hit it up, taking out my fury that way. Probably I wanted to frighten her so that she would have to ask a favour. But I failed of my purpose; she did not speak.

I was raging inside. The she-devil—to throw up my poor brother's misfortune at me! I was shocked, too, to realize that Camilla's wandering had become a subject of general gossip. A trained nurse—but then, she'd be one of the first to pick up scandal. She and her friends went into our homes, and the servants no doubt told them everything, and they amused themselves, at meal-times and other spare moments in the hospital, exchanging titbits about their patients. Yes, it was obvious enough—and disgusting enough!

"A slut!" I said to myself. "She is not worth my anger." But soon I began to make excuses for her. I had goaded her, no doubt about that; and also, I had busted up her party. I couldn't very well expect to hit one of her friends over the head with a piece of gas-pipe, and then have her go out for a joy-ride or a petting party in the moonlight by the river bank! No, I had asked for what I had got; a good whack over my self-esteem with a piece of gossip-pipe.

XXIX

THERE we sat, mum as a pair of sphinxes, most of the way back to the city. Presently, humiliating as the confession sounds, I was trying to think what I could say to her. I wanted the talk to be resumed, but I wanted her to speak the first word. And she wouldn't!

At last, in the suburbs of the city, I had a sufficient excuse. "Where am I to take you, please?"

"You can let me out anywhere," she answered coldly. "I am used to getting about the city."

"I have no engagements," I admitted. "If you don't mind telling me where you are going, I'll leave you there."

"I am going to South Fourteenth Street, number 248."

"All right." And again our acquaintance threatened to die. But I swallowed my pride, and said: "I did not mean to affront you personally, and if I did so, I apologize."

"I am not thinking about anything personal," she answered, still with no warmth in her tone. "I am thinking about the damned arrogance of your class."

I thought that over; until again the voice broke out: "What I really can't understand is your stupidity. If you're telling me the truth, and really have taken those men out into the country and turned them loose—what can you possibly expect to accomplish? Don't you know they will all be at the meeting to-morrow?"

"Will they be so foolish?"

"Of course they will; and the crowds will pack the square. You've given us a fine advertisement."

"You really think you can hold a meeting?"

" Will you be there to stop us? "

" Not personally," I said; " I shall be busy all day with other matters. Perhaps you don't know we have a motor-car race in the stadium to-morrow? "

" Oh, yes, I forgot."

I wasn't sure whether she meant that to hurt my feelings. Fancy anybody in Rivertown forgetting the " classic "!

" Let me tell you," she resumed, in a low voice. " You and your rowdies may break up to-morrow's meeting, and many more; you may crack all our heads, as you did Jerry Fields'. But more of us will come, there will be more meetings, and sooner or later we shall wake your wage-slaves."

" Wage-slaves, hey? " That phrase is like a red flag to me. But I realized that I couldn't get anywhere by losing my temper, so I said, as politely as I could: " You feel yourself a slave in the Rivertown Hospital? "

" As to the position of the professions in the class struggle, I'll be glad to send you some literature, if you're interested."

" May I ask what particular kind of crimson lady you are? "

" I'm a member of the I.W.W."

" I suppose it's naïve of me, but I hadn't realized that they have women members."

" Everything you say is naïve, Mr. Faber. Apparently you haven't realized that there are ten million women wage-workers in this land of the free."

" And all of them slaves? "

" All of them working for the masters of the machines, who exploit their labour, and control their destinies at the point of exploitation. Is that not comprehensible? "

" And what is it you're going to do? "

" We're going to apply the lesson you've given us to-night."

I thought it over, and couldn't help smiling. " You're going to take the employers for a ride—is that it? "

" Absolutely! "

" And will you be polite to them? "

" Unless they resist, Mr. Faber; if they do, we'll just stun them, as you did Jerry."

" Well," I said, " I'm glad to have the facts." I was being sarcastic, of course. " I've been trying to get my friends to believe it, but they call me an alarmist."

" We do all we can to advertise our programme."

" Do you advertise your subsidy from Stalin? "

I heard a little snort. " That's too cheap of you! "

" You mean you don't get your share? "

" I mean we're opposing the communists, and all other politicians, as hard as we can. Also, we're a native American movement, as you would know if you wanted to. There are plenty of causes for revolt here at home, Mr. Faber."

XXX

We had come into Fourteenth Street, and were approaching the number. I realized that the interview was at an end, and I had overlooked an important detail. I said: " We undertook to introduce ourselves, but you didn't do your part."

" My name is Marcia Penny," she responded.

" I'm glad to have met you, Miss Penny. I have found it highly educative."

" Under ordinary circumstances, I'd invite you to have a cup of tea. But you must realize we have a lot of work to do to-night, getting our group together, and making arrangements for to-morrow's meeting. This is strike headquarters; I don't suppose you'd care to come inside and help."

She was smiling at me again, and I chose to stay upon my dignity. I drew up at the kerb, not far from the building; and on the steps I saw a young fellow, wearing a cap. Seeing me, he started forward with a cry.

" Marcia! "

She was in the seat next to the kerb, and held out her hand. " Hello, Ollie! " she said, and I thought to myself: " This is the sweetheart."

" What happened to you? " he demanded.

" Nothing serious. I was taken for a pleasure drive."

" By whom? "

" By this gentleman. Let me introduce Mr. Luke Faber; my brother, Oliver Penny." (" Oh! A brother! " I thought.)

The young man would have had to reach over his sister to shake hands with me, and he made no move to do so. He was a slender chap, with disorderly yellow hair, and those big round spectacles which turn young intellectuals into owls. He stared with the owl eyes, first at me, and then at her.

" What does this mean, Marcia? "

" It's all right, Ollie, I'll tell you about it by and by. Mr. Faber has been very polite, and I've been educating him. He'll make a valuable convert." She was smiling again; but only for a moment. " Have you heard from Jerry? "

" Nothing."

" Nor from any of the others? "

" Not a word."

" Mr. Faber assures me that they're not being beaten —just turned loose in the country; so I suppose we're not to worry."

" Marcia, what the devil——"

" Don't bother, Ollie, it's all right. Have you sent out a story of the raid? "

" Of course. But the papers will be clamouring for more details."

The girl turned to me. " My brother is correspondent for a labour press service, and perhaps you'd like to give him an interview on the events of this evening, and your ideas about them."

I couldn't tell whether she was mocking me or not. " Really, Miss Penny," I said, " this is most embarrassing. I had no idea you had anything to do with newspaper reporters."

" In fact, Mr. Faber, you thought there wouldn't be any publicity! " I saw two rows of white teeth flash again. " You thought you could break up a labour meeting, and kidnap seven well-known leaders, and not have anything at all in the papers."

" You miss the point," I insisted. I felt it necessary to do a little lying in this emergency. " I really had nothing to do with the affair. I just happened to witness it."

" And you just happened to know the intentions of the raiders, and to share their innermost thoughts! But I understand the situation—you're the man higher up, whose connection with crime is not mentioned in the press. You're the ' sacred cow.' "

I hated to ask any favours of this insolent creature, but the time was short and the emergency great. " Miss Penny," I said, " I have to remind you that when you

asked me about the fate of those men, you gave me your promise that it would be confidential."

She thought for a moment. "Yes, that is true."

"Then I desire you to point out to your brother that he is not at liberty to use what I have told you, either in his news dispatches or in conversation with anyone."

"That is your right," she said. "We will both respect it."

"It is a matter of first-rate importance to me, and I wish to be certain that my name will not be mentioned."

She was getting out of the car, and then she turned upon me. "You can realize why we're going to win this fight. We're willing to die for our beliefs, while you aren't even willing to be in the newspapers for yours." With that parting shot she turned and went with her brother into the strike headquarters.

XXXI

It doesn't take long to drive five or ten miles out into the country and back again in a motor-car; this whole adventure had taken less than an hour. I figured that the other cars would soon return; and I wanted to meet the crowd and hear what had happened. I knew of a place where the sporty ones would be apt to come, and I drove there. It was a pool-room, and crowded, this night before the race—with everybody more jolly than mere games of pool could account for. The reason was a speak-easy in the rear, and to-night they hardly troubled to keep the door closed.

I asked for Rufe, and for others, but none had showed up. I said I'd wait, and I watched a game, and answered questions about the race—put to me by persons who wanted betting tips. The keeper of the place sought to repay me with " some of the real stuff," but I thanked him, and explained that I did not drink before the race. I waited a while, and then decided that I could make my inquiries by 'phone, and maybe some of the fellows might be trying to get me at home.

All the way as I drove I was thinking about Marcia Penny. God, how I hated that woman! I wanted to argue with her, I wanted to break her over my knee. Anything in the world except to let her alone and forget about her!

I have Dr. Michaels' view of her now; and, as I have said before, the ideas of these modern psychologists seem to hinge upon sex. Dr. Michaels insists that all love is strongly tinged with hate. The first stage is blind illusion, when we think the beloved is our ideal, and exists to please us; but soon comes the discovery that the beloved is a separate individual, and the tug of wills begins, and the percentage of hate to love may be anything from one to a hundred.

If anyone had told me it was love at the time, I would have hooted the idea. I, a Faber, who had a choice of all the desirable women in the state—I to go chasing after a creature who must be some kind of pervert, a lunatic if she was not a criminal? Never in this world! I was thinking out ways to hurt her; bright things to say—what the French call " staircase wit." My pride would have been outraged by the idea of desiring such a vixen, a spitfire, a fishwife.

Dr. Michaels declares that in Marcia I had found the long-sought object, a woman whom I recognized as my

equal, and possibly my superior. In the case of Virginia, he points out, I found pleasure and comfort, but I considered her a higher kind of servant. As for my fiancée, she was young and timid, and I doubted her, and would not respect her feeble efforts to assert herself. But here I met a woman who defied and challenged me; one who was incomprehensible, so that my imagination was stimulated, and the myth-making faculty started. She was dangerous; she supplied those thrills I had missed overseas, and which I sought in motor-racing.

My mind was in a turmoil with the problem of her; what the devil, I kept thinking. That girl earns her own living, but she wasn't bred in the working classes; she has education and charm—and what has happened, to get her mixed up with those rats? The only thing I could think of was some man; and that made me angry—I wanted to take her away from the ruffian, whoever he might be. Not because I wanted her—oh, no, but for her own good! Or was it because I wanted to have my own way, and bring her to acknowledge my superiority? I add this question because Dr. Michaels suggests it.

I was ignorant about the radicals, and for the first time embarrassed by that ignorance. I knew that I.W.W. stood for " Industrial Workers of the World," and that it was a revolutionary union with a programme of confiscation; but that was all I knew. Now I wondered: how strong were they, and what kind of workers had they managed to infect, and what sort of persons were their leaders? In other words, what sort of fellow would Marcia's lover be, and would she be living with him, openly or secretly? And what would they be doing at their meetings—what sort of secret rites would they have? They would be a dissolute lot, but just how far would they go?

Another thing, their relation to Stalin. It was the first

article of the creed I had got from Clarence Calvin that all these reds were subsidized from Moscow. But Marcia had hooted this idea, and her reaction had sounded genuine. She said the I.W.W. opposed the communists. What was the difference between them? I had no idea, and hitherto would have thought it beneath my dignity to inquire. But now I thought: "I'll have to ask that spy!"

XXXII

I TELEPHONED to Rufe Hanna's house, and learned from his wife that he had not come in. I left word for him to call me, and after that I could only wait. I sat on the veranda, within sound of the telephone, and smoked more cigarettes than I ought to have allowed myself, and thought about Marcia and her brother Oliver, and Jerry Fields, and Lehtimaki, and Gianbattista, and the four other rats we had nabbed. I imagined the different things that might have happened, and what I was going to do about them —and more especially what I was going to say to that hell-cat, that vixen, that fishwife about them; also, of course, what she was going to say about them, and about myself, and about Virginia, and about Camilla, Quint's wife! I clenched my hands every time I thought of her insults, for which I could do nothing to punish her.

But I would! I was going to find a way! To-morrow I would have to leave it to the police; but later on I would organize a rat-hunt, and root every one of the creatures out of their holes. I would report to the doctor who ran the

hospital that he had a red nurse in his employ; and a most startled elderly surgeon he would be! Dr. Agathus was his name—Arch Agathus—and he had come originally from Vienna, and had been our family physician since I was a child. I knew he would take my word, and drive this woman from the hospital. But would that really satisfy me? Did I want to hurt her, or did I want to save her, and persuade her by my more powerful reason and sounder judgment?

I jumped up, startled by the telephone. Rufe on the wire—good old Rufe, dependable and sensible, with nothing red about him but his hair and neck. He made his report; they had taken Lehtimaki out towards Bardstown, and given him a good swift kick in the pants and sent him on his way. The dirty wop had said he wouldn't come back, but of course you couldn't trust them. Rufe hadn't heard from the other guys, but he doubted if any of them had had any fun. A tame bunch, those reds, scared out of their wits, and no fight in them. I told Rufe to let me know if he heard from the others. He took the liberty of advising me to go to bed and get a good sleep before the race; but I said I wasn't tired.

Somehow I found myself thinking about Jerry Fields, whom we had knocked over the head. Marcia had said he was a hero, and a little bit of a saint, and what the dickens could that mean? I argued with her—but I was handicapped by the fact that I didn't know anything about the big blond giant, except that he was a lumberjack. A rough bunch, I knew; I could imagine one of them being a hero, rescuing a comrade from a falling tree, or something like that—but how could a lumberjack be a saint? And how could a woman talk such rot unless she was in love?

Rufe called twice within the next hour to report on

another car. Also, Billy Pike called, to tell how Gianbattista had tried to escape too soon, and they had to give him a couple to the jaw, but nothing serious. He sure proved himself a fast runner, that bastard. But still nothing about the hero and saint.

It wasn't till nearly midnight that I got the truth from Rufe. " Butch " Wilkins, the bootlegger, had been the one who hit Jerry with he gas-pipe, and now " Butch " had come back from the ride and reported: the lumberjack had failed to come. to, and they had been worried about it, and had a hard time figuring out what to do. They didn't like to leave him in the woods, for he might die there; so they decided to take him into Freeport, the nearest village, and lay him on the sidewalk in front of the post office, and make a quick getaway. It was a conspicuous place, and no doubt the bird was in a hospital by now, said Rufe. He told this in what he meant to be cryptic language, not naming any names for fear of someone listening in.

So there was a fine train of thoughts to put a man to sleep on the night before a motor-car race! It was as Marcia had said, the lumberjack might have concussion of the brain, and whether he died or whether he got well, there was bound to be a scandal, and an investigation by the police. The men in the car would be identified, and the fact that the car belonged to a notorious bootlegger would make a fine bit for the reds to mouth. Also, what would come of my part in the matter? Could I expect Marcia to keep her promise not to mention my name if her hero and saint were to die and it was a question of manslaughter charges? No, I was in a mess—and family " pull " would be needed to keep me from getting into the newspapers.

Strange as it may seem, I thought more about Marcia

than about either newspapers or courts, or my own family and friends. What would I say to her? I prepared stern denunciations of labourers who turned mad dog and tried to overthrow the country's institutions just because they had a grievance against an employer. I said this in long arguments which took most of the sleep I needed so badly. I heard the grandfather's clock in the hall strike the four quarters of several hours, and was reduced to the expedient of counting sheep in vast flocks to no purpose. It was the worst training I ever did for a race, and I paid a high price for it.

XXXIII

The sun came up behind the hills and looked into my sleeping-porch and roused me. My first thought was not the race, but the newspapers. I rang the bell, and the servant brought the *Herald,* our local morning sheet, and two metropolitan papers which come by early train. The *Herald* had the story half-way across the front page, and I hand it to them for clever writing. Rufe told me afterwards that Billy Pike had tipped off the sporting editor—thinking that was the right department! The fellow had been there, like myself, as a spectator, and now had it dished up with all the slang of a boxing bout or ball game. He attributed the job to " thirty-two young patriots of Rivertown, each one clad in a blanket of anonymity." I thought that was good.

I looked in the outside papers, and saw that they had the same story in condensed form. You could see it had

come from the *Herald* office, for it kept the sporting tone. A wonderful system, whereby you take part in an adventure in the evening, and next morning read an account of it in papers printed a hundred miles away! Still better, that you can control what is going to be said, even to the language employed!

Glancing over the rest of the *Herald,* I came on a story which did not bring me so much satisfaction. On an inside page was an item from Freeport, to the effect that the body of an unidentified man had been found lying on the sidewalk in front of the post office, and was believed to be the victim of an assault. The body had been taken to the local hospital and pronounced dead, the cause being a fractured skull, apparently by a blow from a club. The man was described as six feet two, and big in proportion, eyes grey, hair brown, etc., and two front teeth missing. There were no papers on him, but apparently the motive had not been robbery, as a purse with money had been left upon the body. The police were investigating the mystery.

So there it was! The son-of-a-gun had gone and died on us, and made us into—just what were we? I could not help figuring it out; strictly speaking, it was murder —yes, first degree murder, for our fellows had been kidnapping, which is a felony, and if it results in death it is a hanging offence in our state. I was just as guilty as anybody, for I had not merely known of the affair in advance, but had conspired, and given the orders. Really, I was more guilty than my bootlegger who had struck the blow.

Of course it would never come to that, but it would be an unpleasant affair. The reds would see that item and identify their comrade—perhaps they had already done so, and the *Herald* had withheld the news. But that

couldn't last long, the outside papers would get the story, and would send reporters, and of course my part would be known. Impossible to keep a secret which is shared by thirty-two men, and perhaps by their wives—to say nothing of a woman "wobbly," and her brother, the correspondent of some labour newspapers! No, I was in for it—and right while I was in the middle of the "classic," perhaps winning it, and making myself the most conspicuous man in to-morrow morning's papers!

A devilish piece of luck that the fellow had to pass out, when we hadn't intended it, and couldn't have foreseen it. I'd have thought he had a skull an inch thick! How I wished I had followed my impulses of caution and made the police do the job, so that the killing would have been regular! I saw now that patriotic motives and such considerations would not help me very much; I would have to pay blackmail to the political crooks—I might even have to agree to support Bobbie Julius for governor!

Then, too, I found myself troubled on account of the dead Jerry Fields. If it hadn't been for Marcia Penny, I'd have said good riddance to the rat, and thought no more of him; but now I could not help hearing the words "hero and saint," and wondering what did she mean? I'd never know from her, I was sure. Whatever the State might do, she would convict me of first degree murder, and hang me by the neck in her opinion!

My hand was trembling as I poured out my cup of hot coffee, and I had no appetite for the toast. I thought: "And right before the race!" For a moment I had an impulse of weakness. "I'll have to drop out!" But then I clenched my hands and got control of myself. I was not the kind to give up to my enemies—not even to a red vixen and spitfire and hell-cat who happened to have a pretty face!

XXXIV

At nine o'clock I was dressed and on the way. There is such a mob in the roads that lead to the stadium that you have to allow yourself time. I remember thinking I had never seen so many cars in the main thoroughfares of Rivertown. Our streets are narrow, and not as straight as they ought to be, since the town is old, and the central part was laid out before modern traffic problems were thought of. It is hard to say what we are to do about it.

It was an ideal day, bright and still; it would be a " scorcher," but nobody minds that, the men take off their coats and fan themselves with ten-cent palm-leaf fans, and they swelter and sweat and yell themselves purple. The admission to the bulk of the seats is only a dollar, and the whole family goes, taking their places early, eating continuous meals out of a box of lunch, and having plenty of noise and excitement.

Now was the crowded hour on the roads, and there is nothing you can do to hurry matters, you have to creep along and take your turn. I had time to think about Jerry Fields and Marcia—or rather to perform an exercise in mental control, and keep myself from thinking about them. Hot dogs, soda pop, oranges and bananas, peanuts and chewing-gum, fans, flags, programmes—the cries of these venders rang in my ears, and the dust and fumes of thousands of cars were in my nostrils. Somewhere in this crawling procession must be my parents and relatives and friends, and I couldn't blame them for disliking crowds. However, this is America, and you can't change it. Make the best of it, and get what fun you can.

I turned into a by-road, out of the traffic, approaching the stadium by a rear entrance reserved for the racers: no parking allowed there, but mobs of people waiting for a chance to see their favourites, and a good part of the police of the city on hand to keep the way clear. We have to hire extra men from the state motor-patrol and other nearby cities, and there has been a fuss in the city council, because some kickers think we auto-men should pay the bill. As if we didn't bring hundreds of thousands of dollars' business to the merchants—to say nothing of advertising the town!

Of course I am the local favourite, and got the greater part of the cheering, and must admit that I welcomed it just then. It wasn't going to be so easy to hang me for murder! I put unpleasant thoughts aside, and greeted the crowd on every side. My car rolled into the tunnel which leads under the stadium; a half cylinder of concrete, with a half circle of light ahead, and echoes of your engine sounding loud. Then out into the sunlight, and that marvellous spectacle—I never cease to thrill to it, never grow blasé. After all, my father and I had a lot to do with the building of that structure, and it will stand as a monument to the power of the Fabers.

Human bodies, row on row, tier on tier, a solid bank of bodies, a mountain slope of them sweeping in a great circle—the "broad saucer," our sporting writers call it. Thirty-five thousand is the capacity of the place, and it is pretty nearly full now, and will be overful before the fun starts. Every last man is out for a holiday, on the alert and ready to yell at the least provocation. To my right as I enter is a block of seats reserved for the Comet Motor Works; everybody in the plant, from night-watchmen to office-boys, is there with his relatives; it is our great day. We have the Comet colours, orange and green, and they

have draped the seats with them, and got little flags to wave; they have worked up a cheer for themselves, and practised it—just like a college. A wonderful thing for the *morale* of an industrial organization!

On the turf inside the track, which is the football field later in the year, are the " pits," with forty or fifty racing cars. We have four of the Comets on hand, and two of the engines are purring softly, warming up. Gus is waiting for me, so excited his grin splits his cheeks. " She's fit as a fiddle, Chief! " I slide into the driver's seat, and move on to the track. Etiquette requires that you make one or more circles; you are supposed to be trying her out, but really you are making a flourish, showing yourself to those who have put their money on you. Several millions change hands at each of these events; and of course I am the local favourite. It will be a " blue Monday " for Rivertown if I fail them. My conscience troubles me, that I broke my training and went out hunting reds!

The Comet cars are painted with our colours, so nobody needs the identification number in the rear. There is a thunder of cheers all the way round the track, and I am lifted up and borne along. " Yea, Luke! " they yell. " Attaboy, Luke Faber! " It is like a breaker sweeping down the shore, timed to the speed of the car. Women wave handkerchiefs, men wave flags, they toss their straw hats into the air, they even throw them on to the track —and afterwards jump down and get them back! Our factory crowd goes mad, of course; I wave to them as I roll by, my eyes running over the sea of faces, picking out one here and there.

Presently I am coming to the " grand stand," so called, though it has no roof. Here is where the race begins and ends, and the seats are three dollars, and box-seats five, which has the effect of sorting out the crowd and making

it fashionable. Here you see the notables, the heads of our city; my participation helps to make it a "society" affair, and they all come, despite the heat and discomfort. Hortense is there with her mother and father, in the front row; I slow up as I pass, and wave to them. Then I glance up to the rear of the stand, where I have given Virginia two tickets. She is on hand with a woman friend, and standing up, so that I can see her.

Two of the centre boxes are reserved for my family: in the front row mother, and Grace, and Amy, and several women cousins and aunts: behind them my grandfather and father and two uncles, and more cousins. All are smiling, the women waving handkerchiefs, and I give them the high sign. They are proud, you can be sure—even those who are frightened! I don't think I am vainglorious, but a moment like this, when you see everybody you know, or have ever known since you were a child, lined up to watch you and greet you—a man would have to be something less than human, or something more, not to enjoy it.

XXXV

I DON'T want to hog the applause, so I content myself with one circuit of the track. I return to our "pit," and various persons come to shake hands and wish me luck. Quint comes, wearing an official's badge, to tell me the result of the drawings—I am in the second of the qualifying heats. The manager of the plant comes, and a bunch

of our executives, and others of the Legion fellows; I catch a glimpse of Billy Pike and " Butch " Wilkins, and have an idea they look worried.

Our rivals are on hand; there are twenty-seven entries, and many extra cars; a murmur of machinery, and a blue haze, and smell of burning castor-oil in the air. The field swarms with mechanics and dealers and salesmen and whatnot. Many of the drivers I know from previous years' events, and we greet one another politely, but without cordiality, for the competition is keen. The attitude of the drivers to me is a peculiar one; at first they regarded me as a " dude " among horse-wranglers, but after I had won a race, they warmed up somewhat. They can't but be aware that I confer prestige upon the event, and raise their social status, so to speak.

For my part I meet them cordially, wherever it may be. There are good fellows among them—several have been through high school, I am told. It is not so easy to climb to the top, and this is a paying business while you last. I persist in my practice of knowing all sorts of men; I don't feel that it does me harm to " go down into the arena," as Hortense phrases it. I know how to value myself and my family, but I have to handle men, and I refuse to content myself with the country club crowd, and the little heaven that it makes all by itself.

I persist that I am not just playing in these automobile races; nor am I merely advertising cars. I have a definite social motive; I choose to be a public man like my grandfather, and let the people think of me as having a friendly disposition. Long ago I made up my mind that it is the duty of men of my class to take thought for the welfare of the city; when I went out, as a young chap, to persuade our men of means to give money for the stadium, it was an argument I used over and over, that to have a place

where the masses could assemble would be, not merely a means of entertainment, but an aid to the technique of government, a means of creating social spirit, and infusing a sense of civic pride.

Nor do I think it a small matter to keep the masses amused. They look forward to this " classic " for half a year, and talk about it for another half; it lights the drabness of their lives, and gives them something to brag about to the inhabitants of less fortunate cities. There are football games in the fall, and track-games in the spring, a three-ring circus every August, and skating races in the winter. The Catholic church had a solemn High Mass, celebrated by a cardinal and a hundred or so of priests, and the American Legion has had several first-class boxing bouts; the schools got up a pageant, and now our friends are talking about an old-fashioned " society circus." The new development of the radio enables us to broadcast these happenings, and old people and invalids, and those who haven't the money to travel, can sit in their homes and share the fun.

" Keep the people happy," I insist; and grandfather smiles his dry smile, and says : " Bread and circuses." He is of the opinion that more circuses and less bread would be better for the State. We have had soup-kitchens in Rivertown for the past three winters, and it is hard to know what to do about the problem of unemployment. Charity is demoralizing to the poor; and besides, other cities fail to do their duty, and word spreads among their floating population, and they climb on to the first freight train, or come " hitch-hiking," and camp out on us. The more you give, the more they demand; grandfather says that if we keep it up, they will marry here, and raise families upon our bounty. His idea is to drive out all who haven't homes in Rivertown; and for our own

workers, he agrees with me that we should give them shows and entertainments, to keep their minds occupied.

XXXVI

The first batch of cars were called for the elimination heats. As we never put more than ten cars on the track at once, there are three trial heats, the first three in each heat entering the final race. In order to keep the excitement going, some manufacturers of accessories have offered prizes amounting to a thousand dollars for the winner of each heat. By that means the manufacturers grab off a little advertising. The preliminaries are fifteen-mile races, or thirty laps upon our half-mile track. The race proper is fifty miles, or one hundred laps.

The first nine cars line up. Each has a big number in back, so that the crowd can consult their programmes and know whom to shout for. The nine "jockeys," as Hortense calls them, wear leather coats and helmets with big goggles, which make them look more like divers. Their positions have been determined by lot; and each man is figuring how to forge out and get the coveted place at the front and close to the rail. They start, and make a circle of the track, and come to the starting line at high speed, as nearly in position as possible. If the starter is satisfied, he drops the green flag and they are off. If they are not in satisfactory positions, he will make them go round again and again.

The flag drops, and the engines roar, and so does the crowd. Around they go, and the shouting with them.

I am standing near the starter's box, and time them with a stop-watch; the leader " turns the track " in 24·8 seconds. They will cut that down, lap by lap; the record for our track is 21·4, which is a trifle over seventy-five miles an hour. That may sound tame to those who do not know our " broad saucer." You must remember we have no straightaway at all, and our thirty feet of banking at the ends has been leaped over several times by drivers who preferred death to dishonour.

Round and round they go, with a mighty roaring. Very soon they are strung out in a line, and the race resolves itself into a series of duels, of men trying to pass each other. There are strict rules which govern the driving, and if you break them you may be " flagged out "; but the most effective restriction is the fact that you can't kill the other fellow without an equal chance of killing yourself. If you go too fast at the turn, you will either upset or swing out from the rail too far, and give the man at your heels a chance to nose in. If he gets his nose between you and the rail, you cannot cut him off, because you will wreck both cars. You have to put on more speed—and that means the two of you come tearing down to the next turn, a matter of half a dozen seconds, and which of you is the irresistible force, and which the immovable body?

You hang on to the other man's heels, watching for a chance either to right or left, and the decision is a matter of the hundredth part of a second, and a fraction of an inch movement of the steering-wheel. You can figure it for yourself: seventy-five miles an hour is one hundred and ten feet a second, and your passing the other fellow is always a matter of an inch or two. You have to know your car, and your own nerves, and the track, and then have part of your mind free to figure your opponent. You

calculate just how close to follow him; if you are too near you have to make too sudden a swing to pass him, and if he slows up the least bit, you will hit him. On the other hand, if you are not close enough, you lose the chance which may arise to stick your nose in and force him out of his place. You cannot be too cautious, because there are only thirty laps to go, and there may be several cars you have to pass—to say nothing of the fellow who is hanging on to your heels all the time, figuring the mad project of running by two cars at once.

For the spectators it is like a five ringed circus; they don't know where to watch. Suddenly there is a roar from the crowd, and you look to a new place. Thirty-five thousand people are on their feet, dancing and shrieking with excitement. Some have their favourites to yell for and exhort; others find it more fun to adopt the leader; the great mass yells because the others are yelling, and it is what they have come for. The racers, of course, don't know the crowd is there; they have their eyes glued upon the object in front of them, seen dimly through a haze of grey-blue smoke and dust. We sweep the track, and dampen it, but there is always dust, and always danger.

XXXVII

I HAVE been following this sport for ten years, but for jazz effects this year's " classic " took the prize over everything I ever witnessed. In the third lap of the first heat, a lunatic in a Diabolo car tried to pass the field high up on the banked turn, and took off a chunk of a post with

his axle—and then managed to get back on to the track, and crashed through the inside fence, and out on to the empty turf, where fortunately there was room for his cavorting. On the seventh lap another fellow broke through the inside fence, and managed to come back on to the track by punching another hole. On the twenty-second lap—I am checking these incidents by the lively account of the sporting writer of the Rivertown *Herald* —a Ferox car had a front tire cut to ribbons by the grind, and the driver managed to get off the track without being hurt.

In my heat, the second one, came more thrills. I had good luck, personally, being the third car after the second lap, and managing to nose out both of these rivals quickly. I have my own theory about driving; I notice that more cars go wild and hit the fence than actually overturn, so I figure that there is a margin of safety, due to the fears of drivers when their cars get up on two wheels. I made the turn an inch or so shorter than the rest—and so I came in the winner of that heat. But I had a horrible scare on the twenty-eighth lap, because a man behind me lost two wheels, and spun round and stopped and burst into flame, and when I came round to the place twenty seconds later, there was a blazing car, and people running to it.

It is incredible what fools will do on a racing-track. They sit and watch the swarm of cars roaring round and round, and you'd think they must realize the speed and the danger; yet the moment there is an accident, they leap in, seeming to forget there is anybody in the world but one wrecked driver. Of course it's right to try to save a driver—but what about all the others? That is the greatest danger in our sport, and one about which you can do nothing; you trust your life to the lack of judgment of

some thousands of would-be heroes lined up on both sides of the track.

I managed to get through a hole between two heroes, but I had to swerve, and grazed a post of the inside fence, and Rufe tells me that he examined the place, and I had gouged out an inch or two. It was a close call, and it made me realize the state of my nerves. I managed to hold my position, and came in number one, but I was glad the race was over, and I didn't want to talk to anybody. The mind is a queer thing; after I had passed the line, and seen the checkered flag fall, I was thinking: " I have won enough money for the Rivertown Hospital to pay Marcia Penny's salary for a number of months—I wonder how many! "

The third and last of the preliminary heats proved to be the most hair-raising yet. At the very start-off two cars got tangled and blocked the course, leaving a narrow lane through which the others had to shoot. The yellow flag, which signals an accident on the track, was up through most of the race. Only four cars finished, the rest being strewn about the course, with nobody seriously hurt, however. It really was a farcical comedy, with all the crowd laughing; at the climax the leading car got a broken connecting rod, and turned half the track without any power, but still with sufficient lead to win.

After the preliminaries we have an intermission until the big race, which is called at two o'clock. The fashionable folk drive home, or to the country club for lunch, while *hoi polloi* hold on to their seats, eating out of baskets and boxes, with umbrellas over their heads, and " ice cold soda pop " to combat the heat. We have the firemen's band to entertain them, and singing and oratory, interspersed with advertising of tonics to make their hair grow and ointments to remove their bunions. There is a marvellous system of

loud-speakers, whereby the feeblest voice is converted into a bellow, or rather a score of them, aimed at each section of the stands. Claude Winters, my lively young manager, does the announcing of all the events, interspersed with personal gossip about the racers and officials; I won't say it is exactly refined, but it makes a hit with the mob, and you hear explosions of laughter all over the place. It is a big family party, with thirty-five thousand guests, and everybody calling everybody else by his first name.

XXXVIII

I TURNED my roadster so as to shade me from the sun, and would have been glad to have a rest during this intermission. But crowds swarmed about, and presently came Billy Pike and Rufe Hanna, looking very solemn, and saying they wanted to have a business conference with me. There was no other way to get privacy, so they sat in the car, Billy in Rufe's lap, and I drove them a couple of times slowly round the track; the crowds shouted to me, but I forgot to be polite this time. Billy was telling me how the body of Jerry Fields had been identified, and the newspapers had the story, and the sporting editor of the *Herald* wanted to know how it was to be handled in to-morrow's paper.

A fine time to put such a load on to a man's mind! All that I could say was, the *Herald* must wait. I would explain matters to my brother, and have him get word to my father and grandfather, and as soon as the race was over we would meet for a conference. Billy and

Rufe were to come to my home after the race; we would then know what had happened at the square, and what attitude the reds had taken to the matter.

These rats had had the cunning to call their so-called "mass meeting" for four in the afternoon, just as the crowds were getting in from the race, and looking for fresh diversion. Billy told me several items of news he had got from the *Herald* editor. Clarence Calvin's pottery workers had declared a sympathetic strike, effective in the morning; the thing was beginning to look like a revolution. A deputation of the labour people had interviewed the chief of police, demanding the detection and punishment of the "kidnappers" and "murderers"—imagine the nerve of these people, bawling for protection from that Government which they are doing their best to overthrow! They would make all the fuss they could, of course. No doubt they would have a supply of banners and signs, denouncing the Legion and its doings; Fascisti, they call us, and Billy wanted to know what the hell was that. Both he and Rufe wanted to get our crowd together again, but I told them to leave it to the police now, we had done our share.

There is an afternoon paper published in Rivertown, and Rufe had no idea how this paper would handle the news, and I had nothing to advise, for this is a paper we never can count upon. The publisher is Valentine, who is tied up with our electric light and power interests, and has been trying to get franchises from the legislature, which some of our older families regard as a steal from the community, and have opposed from the highest public motives. He is a self-made man, cursed with a wife and daughters who want to play a part in what they call "society"—by which they mean inviting us to their entertainments, and then exploiting our presence in their

father's paper. Naturally, we do not co-operate with such vulgarians, and in an emergency like this I have no idea what I am going to read about myself in the Rivertown *Evening Telegram*.

I look up my brother, and take him for a ride around the track, and explain matters to him. There are a hundred questions he wants to ask, but I have to tell him to wait until the race is over. I know that I ought to rest, but there is no place I can go; I dare not go outside, for fear of being blocked off and getting back too late. I have to sit in our "pit," among mechanics and visitors, and chat with a score of persons who crowd about my car, meaning to be friendly. But I hardly know what I am answering them; I am thinking, shall I have someone call up Valentine or the *Telegram*? Shall I send anyone to see the chief of police? The trouble is, if I take any action, it will direct attention upon myself; and there may still be a chance of my not being named.

The crowds come swarming back, and the big event is called. I am glad, for the tension is beginning to tell. I make a violent effort and thrust the trouble from my mind. I am going into the race, and win the damned thing, and after that—what a comfort to have the sage counsel of my father and grandfather, of mother and Uncle Martin! I am glad of that family solidarity, and the power which the Fabers have worked for generations to build.

As winner of the second heat, I am number two in the front line, and I put my car in position. Nine powerful engines are purring, and shoving out streams of gasolene fumes. We start; and nine men round the course and come to the line with every nerve taut, and eyes fixed upon the green flag. I have forgotten my troubles now;

I am the maker of the Comet Model X, and am going to prove that it is the best car ever made in the world! We go round twice before the starter is satisfied; then the flag falls, and we are off with a roar.

The finish came quickly, and I won't try to embellish it with fancy language. I was on the third lap, second in position, and meaning to pass the car ahead or bust something. There is a "lap prize" of one hundred dollars per lap, which accounts for ten thousand dollars of the total prize. So if you mean to win the race, you might as well take the lead early, and double your winnings. The Comet shot in at the next turn, cutting between the car ahead and the inside rail. But at that inconvenient moment a front tire blew out, and the car gave a lurch. I have had that happen before, and been able to save myself; but this time my reactions were not quick enough. The car hit a post of the fence, and careened wildly, just missing the rear wheels of the leader, and being missed by another car hanging to its tail. It crashed against the side of the stadium, went up into the air and turned a complete somersault, landed safely on the track, and rolled peacefully on.

At least, I was told afterwards that is what happened. I was thrown clear, and had one extremely unpleasant moment of whirling through the air, and after that I knew nothing.

XXXIX

How shall I tell the next stage of this story? In other words, shall I tell it from the point of view of relatives and friends, physicians and hospital attendants, or shall I tell it from my own? Shall it be the story of my body or the story of my mind? Since the former can be covered in a paragraph, the simplest thing will be to get that out of the way.

I was dragged off the track unconscious, and carried to one of the waiting ambulances, and driven to the Rivertown Hospital. The doctors took X-rays, and discovered that I had a fracture at the base of the skull, a place impossible to operate upon. So there was nothing to do but put me to bed and leave it to nature, or to God. My mother and sisters came and prayed over me, and so did the Rev. Featherway and his assistant, Dr. Bull. I lay in a state of coma for three weeks, being fed milk by a tube, and giving only a few signs of consciousness now and then. Such was the story of my body.

And now for my mind, of which I will tell exactly as it seemed to me, leaving attempts to explain it to Dr. Michaels and his learned colleagues.

I opened my eyes, dizzy and confused, with a roaring in my head which at first I could not distinguish from the roaring outside. I was lying flat, with my face in what seemed to be sand—I know because later on I found a lot of it in my clothes. I tried to get my face out of it; I lifted my head, and there was blood running into my eyes, and everything was blurred, but through it

I saw a haze of faces and forms, and I realized that there was a crowd shouting. Instantly I remembered, I was in a race, and in danger of being run over.

Figures were running to me, and the foremost of them was Rufe—good old red-headed Rufe, with his face of concern. He seized me and began to drag me, and I knew that I must move quickly and tried to help him. Something came bearing down upon us with a great racket, and I saw it whirl by, just missing us.

I can't tell the order of these impressions; but one thing stood out vividly—horses, galloping horses, and a pounding of hoofs. My thought was: "Why, that's crazy! There can't be horses!" But horses there were, indubitably, four of them yoked together, tearing madly past; one four, and then another, and behind each four a little chariot, high in front and open in back, with a man standing up, plying a whip upon the backs of the horses and shouting to them. They went storming along, each in a cloud of dust, and if I couldn't believe what I had seen, there came another, so that I could make certain.

I had been dragged to the side of the track, and there was Rufe, with three or four other men, lifting me up; Rufe was exclaiming: "Are you hurt, master?" They raised me on to a kind of platform above the track, and the others climbed up, out of danger. Rufe wiped the blood from my eyes and from my forehead, and then I could see better, and noted that all these men had on white tunics, belted at the waist, and short like a Scotchman's kilt, with bare legs. I thought: "What is this I have got into, a moving picture show?" I knew that I had been in an accident, of course, and my thought was: "By God, I've gone nutty!"

But there I was, on a sort of long platform of wood, in the centre of an arena in which four-horse chariot

races were going on; and my foreman and buddy, Rufus Hanna, was exclaiming: " Are you hurt, master? " I answered: " No, I'm all right," and heard him respond: " What did you say, master? " I repeated the words, and it was only when I could not make him understand me that I realized the amazing fact: Rufe was talking Latin! " Es tu læsus, domine? " I had understood his question, and in the confusion had failed to realize that it was a different language. Then, of course, I knew that I was " nutty."

But Rufe kept pounding at me with questions; he was worried about me, and more so than ever when I answered in American. So finally I said: " Tutus sum! Ne vexa! " Then he was satisfied.

Across the track from us was a vast crowd, a bank of people, tier upon tier, standing up, shouting, waving streamers of cloth. The people were dressed in white, or other bright colours, and were in a state of frenzy, evidently at the climax of the race; the chariots went thundering by, one hanging on to another's quarter and striving to pass, and the roaring of the spectators followed them around the arena; men leaned forward until they were hanging over the rail, and seemed as if pushing their favourite on with their arms. Rufe and the other men forgot me, and took to shouting for their friends.

So I had a minute or two to get myself together. I thought: " This is *Rome*! " Then I thought: " But that is crazy! It *can't* be Rome! " I tried to figure it out, and decided: " I have been knocked silly, and this is a dream! " Yes, that was the explanation! I even remember thinking it was because I had learned Latin, and heard so much about Rome from Uncle Cornelius! You know how it happens now and then; you think: " This is a dream! An uncomfortable dream, and I

must manage to wake up." So now; only this dream was not so bad; I was in no great hurry, but went on thinking it was queer, and how long would it last. I was puzzled because, as my mind got more clear, it continued to last, and even became more real and natural.

XL

I LOOKED into the arena, and at the far side lay an overturned chariot with one wheel gone, and the axle sticking up in the air. This chariot was painted orange and green, and I knew those were the Faber colours. I saw two of the quadrigæ go by in a whirlwind of dust, the drivers' colours streaming behind, and I knew those men; I knew that Pollio was driving a Ferox, and that Marcus was driving a Diabolus, and I chose sides at once. But I was annoyed because the Cometes, the best racing-chariot in the whole world, was wrecked and disgraced out there on the track!

From the mass of spectators on the other side a young man detached himself, and climbed over the rail and let himself down into the arena. When the track was clear, he ran across, and I knew he was Quint, and was not surprised that his tunic was snow-white, with orange and green braid—for Quint had always been a fancy dresser. He called, asking how I was, and I knew that I must answer in Latin, and did so. Quint leaped to my side, and cried what a shame that I was out. Then he turned to watch the race like the others.

I realized that the part of the stand where Quint had

come from was the podium, and my people would be anxious about me. I looked, and saw the togas of senators, with their broad purple stripes. There was my grandfather, and alongside him my father, and on the other side my two uncles; all the family, including the ladies. I thought: "They will be worried," and I rose to my feet and waved to them. But it was the climax of the race—the two leaders were sweeping round to the home-stretch—and there was only one member of my family, my mother, who had any thought for me.

When the race was over and the victor had made his round of the track, carrying the golden palm of victory and receiving the cheers of the multitude—then my companions helped me down and across the track. I discovered a severe pain in one shoulder, and knew that I must have a dislocation or a break; but I said nothing because I did not want to alarm the family, and I wanted to see the sport. Rufe made a step of his two hands and I got on to his shoulders, and managed to climb over the wooden rail and join my family.

There was cheering all around, and I realized that I was the scion of a great house, and was receiving an ovation. The shouting continued—it was all over the place, and I knew that these were my friends and neighbours, expressing their pride in me, and trying to console me for my misfortune. So I stood upon the seat, bloody face and all, and bowed again and again. Naturally, I was thrilled, for this was the wealth and fashion of ancient Rome assembled for the Apollinarian games, and they were thanking me for having helped entertain them. Even the six Vestal Virgins, seated in the front row, paid tribute to me.

It was a curious thing; all this was new to me, yet at the same time it was familiar. I knew that I was an

American of the twentieth century, and had no business to be familiar with Rome of more than twenty centuries back; yet there I was, and perfectly at home, except that I knew I oughtn't to be, and couldn't figure out how I could be. Lucius Faber was my name, and there was my grandfather, the senator, dressed in a white woollen tunic, with broad purple stripes, inlaid with silver, running down from each shoulder, and over it a toga, also with purple bands; he had high shoes of a bright red colour, which helped to mark his rank, and did not surprise me. He was bare-headed, as were all, both men and women. My mother wore the stola, large and voluminous, covered with the palla, a sort of shawl.

There were my two sisters, Gratia and Amata, looking very lovely. Farther on sat Hortensia Manlia, with her parents, and she was my betrothed, and I remembered that she had threatened to throw me over, and I wondered now was she angry or proud? I looked back into the upper tiers of seats; I had given Virginia Tullia two of the little thin discs of terra cotta with numbers on them, the tickets for reserved seats, and I saw her standing up. I signalled to her that I was all right, but she made no answering sign—not being one to thrust herself forward in such a public place. Her face was pale, ringed with dark hair, simply arranged, and I thought of our many nights of happiness, and also, being only human, I thought of roast duck!

My eyes travelled back to the group of my cousins and other relatives. I smiled to my uncle, Cornelius Faber, the eminent authority upon ancient Egyptian civilization; and to his guest, the elderly Greek historian, Polybius, who, I knew without anybody's having to tell me, had written an elaborate history of our Roman Republic and some of its wars. Just beyond him sat Clarentus Calvus, with his

bald head, and I knew that his misfortune was hereditary, because his father and his grandfather before him had been called " the bald." I knew that he was our leading manufacturer of wine-jars, and wondered if he knew that his workmen had declared a strike, and joined the other labour guilds, desecrating this holy day by threatening to riot in the Forum.

I knew all that; and I thought: " How interesting! What an unusual experience! " When my father spoke to me, congratulating me upon my escape, I thought something like this: " His pronunciation is not according to the British, nor yet to the continental method; the vowels are shorter, and he slurs the ' um ' at the end of the neuter form of adjectives and participles! " You understand that nobody knows just how the Romans pronounced their language, and I had often discussed the probabilities with my Uncle Cornelius. Now I thought: " How Uncle Cornelius would be interested in this! " And all the time there was Uncle Cornelius sitting before me, knowing as much about it as I did! Thus curiously the two worlds were mingled in my consciousness; and this continued all the way through.

XLI

My mother made room for me to sit beside her, despite the blood and dirt which was all over me. She wiped some of the mess from my face, scolding me gently meanwhile: " Oh, Lucius, I do beg you to quit this racing! It is so undignified, so unworthy of our family position!

Think if you had been killed! " I answered, somewhat impatiently: " I'm all right, mother. It is a great sport. I had those fellows licked, if it hadn't been for that broken wheel." At the same time I was thinking: " I must be sure to use the right words, and to pronounce them as the others do." I thought: " What would she make of it if I were to speak English? " And then: " But English doesn't exist yet! America doesn't exist! How queer! "

Down in the arena they were assembling for another race; bigæ, this time, two-horse chariots, not so exciting. Meanwhile, I was looking about me, getting myself straightened out as to who I was and what I knew and what I didn't know; the oddest jumble, with no order to it. I remember thinking this must be the Colosseum; but then I realized the Colosseum wasn't built until the time of the emperors. I knew that the Rome in which I found myself now was 616 anno urbis conditæ, which I figured to be 138 B.C. But of course these people didn't know they were B.C.—and how crazy they would think me if I mentioned it!

This racing place was the Circus Maximus. The track was not a " broad saucer," like ours in Rivertown, but long and narrow, and the building was cut square at one end, where the stables for the horses and the chariots were. Down the middle of the track ran the spina, the barrier on to which I had been lifted for safety from the chariots. At each end were high triple pillars, the metæ, and the chariots raced down a straight track, and turned these pillars, and came back on the other side. The spina was lined with images and memorial shrines, and seven dolphins, one of which was taken down as each lap of the race was completed. In the centre was a platform for starter and judges. Oddly enough the signal flags were

the same; the teams were lined up four abreast, and started at the dropping of a green flag.

Also, the crowd was the same, a holiday bunch with picnic lunches, buying nuts and fruits from venders, and little jugs of wine which had been cooled by evaporation. When the race started, the crowd behaved exactly as we do in Rivertown; leaping up and climbing over each other in their excitement. The patricians forgot their haughtiness, and grave senators in red calcei and purple-striped togas yelled and danced like the same kind of men in Rivertown, when one of our home quarter-backs gets round the end and starts a dash for the goal-line.

A tumultuous scene; and because one of those bigæ was painted orange and green, a product of the Cometes Chariot Works, I was on my feet with the rest, forgetting the burning pain in my shoulder. When they swung round the sharp turn, scattering the sand for twenty or thirty feet, I saw that my auriga was remembering my orders as to the holding of the inside track, and I shouted for him: "Evax, Augustus!" His name may seem fancy for an auriga, but the reason was that his father was a freedman, a former Achaen slave in our family, and our aristocracy amused itself by giving high-sounding names to family servants. As in America you would find negro slaves called Cæsar and Pompey, so in this Rome of my sojourn, we would name our servants derisively after the enemies who had dared to challenge our growing dominion; we had in our kitchen scullions called Hannibal and Hamilcar and Hasdrubal.

We were cheated out of that race by a vile trick of one of the Ferox drivers on the last lap. Our family and friends were enraged about it, and shouted protests to the judges, and the fact that the deciding vote against us was cast by a member of the Scipio family was a cause

of much bitterness. The Scipios had been rivals of the Fabers for a long time, and there was no love lost, but never would we have stooped to such methods as seeking to deprive them of a racing palm. The incident spoiled the day for us, especially as we lost the last and most important race through an accident at the start.

This was the grand finale, among four quadrigæ which had won preceding races, and I had fully counted upon being one of these. Another Cometes had managed to get in, but on the very first round an auriga of the Diabolus outfit hooked his long projecting hub into the wheel of our chariot, and over went the two of them in a tangle of bronze and wood and harness and horses' hoofs. The frenzied steeds dragged the tangled cars half-way round the tracks before they were stopped, while the mob cheered madly—for of course there is nothing a racing crowd loves so much as danger.

Our auriga was badly hurt; and again a Ferox car bore off the prize. There was keen competition among the builders of chariots, and the sales depended in great part upon the outcome of these races, so it was a bitter blow to me. And right in the middle of it, while I was sick with disgust, and no member of my family could think of any word of comfort, Quintus came up to me and whispered: "Don't forget, fratre mi, we have to get home quickly for a conference."

Like a flash there burst upon my mind all those matters which had been knocked out of it by the accident. I remembered what had happened last night: that I had sent out my buddies of the American Legion—no, of course, it was the Roman Legion—and they had seized a bunch of labour agitators and carried them out of town; one of them, a giant by the name of Fields—Agri he was in Latin—a leader of the Lumbermen's Guild from the far North-

west—the Apennine Mountains—had been knocked over the head and killed. I had told my brother to explain matters to the elders of our family, so that after the race we could go home and consult upon the proper procedure to take.

"Come," said my grandfather commandingly, "we have important business at home." "Res graves in domo" —and at once our steward, who was in charge of travelling, hurried off to assemble our chairs. The men led the way, and the ladies followed; the crowd, which had already begun to stream into the vomitoria, or tunnels which served as exits, gave way respectfully before the red shoes and purple stripes, and our procession of some thirty patricians, relatives and guests and half a dozen servants, made their way out out of the amphitheatre.

XLII

THE Vestals were just ahead of us: six stately ladies clad in snow-white linen, and dedicated to chastity for thirty years; the youngest of them, eight years old, walking as sedately and bowed to as respectfully as the Vestalis Maxima. We saw them getting into their plostrum, the heavy bronze carriage, decorated with representations of the sacred fire. They were the only persons permitted to drive inside the limits of the city of Rome, but this permission was of little use to-day, because of the pressure of the crowds. A lictor marched ahead of them to clear the way.

The ladies of our family were borne in very splendid sedan-chairs, each carried by six slaves in bright liveries, and

having curtains of embossed leather to shield them from the eyes of the curious. The older men also rode in such chairs, and one was provided for me, because of my injury; I was glad, because I was beginning to feel weak, and my shoulder hurt so that it was hard to forget it. I settled myself in the cushioned seat, holding myself steady with my well arm against the rocking of the chair. The mob pressed about us, staring at the great people; they cheered me as the giver of the games—if not as the champion upon whom they had lost so many millions of sesterces!

The Circus Maximus lay in the valley between the Palatine and Aventine hills, just near the oldest city wall. Our town house stood upon the south slope of the former hill, among the residences of the wealthy. The ladies would be carried there directly; but grandfather had decided that we men should know what was happening at the attempted meeting of the labour guilds, so he ordered our chairs carried around through the Forum. He suggested that I might prefer to go with the women; but I replied that I had never accepted such a classification.

Our procession set out, in due order: grandfather, father, Uncle Martinus Silvester, Uncle Cornelius, the historian Polybius, and myself. The servants went ahead to clear the way, and my brother Quintus rode beside my chair on a lively little Numidian pony, which he drove into people if he thought they were not sufficiently prompt in giving way. Behind us followed Rufus Hanno and Picus, the boxer, who were to await the conference at our home. Hanno, my old drill-sergeant, is the son of a freedman; his father, while a slave, had been named after the Carthaginian admiral who made so much trouble for our fleets. Picus, the pugil, used to be a gladiator, but earned prize-money and bought his freedom, and now lives prosperously by entertaining crowds with his skill.

We followed directly behind the carriage of the Vestals, whose temple stood by the Forum. The distance is only about half a mile, but it must have taken half an hour, such was the pressure of the throngs. I kept my curtains thrown back, watching, and thinking: "So this is Republican Rome!" I was astonished by the narrowness and crookedness of the streets, and I thought: "Something has got to be done about this traffic problem!" I said to myself: "If I am ever elected prætor of this town, I will certainly clean out these sellers of sausages and boiled peas!" You couldn't imagine it; these fellows, having trays slung from round their necks, shouted their wares into your face and thrust them under your nose. Vile stuff the sausages must have been, made out of ancient horses, and people say out of dogs, though I don't suppose that can really be true. If I am a prætor, I will have to investigate the slaughter-houses. I have a vague recollection that somebody wrote a book on this subject, and I must look it up.

The way led through the Vicus Tuscus, a street given up to perfumers' shops; but now it was blocked by venders of all kinds of stinking things: fried fish and meats, sulphur matches and salves—the latter being especially aggressive, on account of my bloody head; barbers, who set up their stands on the edge of the street, and wine-sellers, having tables covered with their products, each bottle fastened with a little chain, to keep the thieves from making off with it; jewellers and lace-merchants, sellers of melons in slices, and of cakes and tarts on trays, of nuts and sweetmeats made of honey—you could not imagine the mobs of them, all roaring their loudest now, because the crowds were coming from the races, hungry and thirsty, and some of them with money in their pockets won by betting against the Cometes chariots! "Make

way for Senator Faber! " our servants would shout, and would jostle the elbow of a barber, and compel his customer to move back into the midst of a fruit pedlar's wares.

I was disappointed by the appearance of the buildings. I had thought of marble palaces, but here I saw jerry-built shops of unpainted wood, and houses of rough brick, with clothes-lines hanging out of the second-story windows. The larger buildings were of turfa, a grey lava rock, as dirty-looking and unattractive as you could imagine. The streets were paved with blocks of this material, with nothing to fill the cracks. Many of the best streets were not paved at all, and the sewers were open, to let the rains wash in. I thought: " If this is the grandeur that was Rome, the poets are liars." I was disappointed—and yet, at the same time, I had lived here all my life, and had just donated the Ludi Apollinares for the entertainment of the populace! Queer mixed-up states of mind, changing as suddenly as a kaleidoscope!

XLIII

We came to the Forum Romanum magnum, as it was called, a public meeting-place, rectangular in shape, just about the size of Central Square. At this period it was in process of changing from a town meeting-ground to the centre of the world's affairs. On the south side stood three fine structures, the temple of Vesta, the convent of the Vestals, and the temple of Castor and Pollux, completed during my lifetime. On the north side, running

into the high cliffs of the Capitoline hill, was an old stone quarry, which had been turned into the State prison, the Carcer Tullianus—most conveniently situated for the events which were happening that afternoon! On the east side was a stone enclosure, the Curia, in which the senators held their meetings, and a crudely fenced-in space, like a sheep-pen, called the Comitium, where the elections took place. Along the west side, and scattered in between the public buildings everywhere, were private lots, occupied by everything you would find around our Central Square in Rivertown: butchers' and grocers' shops, schoolmasters, bankers and brokers—and on one of the most desirable corners the offices of the shipping business of Caius Lucius Faber, eldest son of the senator, and father of your informant.

The Forum itself was crowded with statues and monuments and trees, several of them old and famous; there was the Ficus Ruminalis, the fig-tree under which it was believed that Romulus and Remus had been exposed and mothered by the she-wolf, six hundred and sixteen years back; also there was a lotus-tree, even older than the city of Rome. There was the famous bronze statue of Marsyas, the gathering-place of the unemployed lawyers, eager for clients. There was the Canalis, a place which it would not be refined to describe in detail; it was the haunt of drunkards, who were called derisively canalicolæ. There was the sundial, a favourite loafing place—you know the kind of old boys who sun themselves on benches in public squares. There was the Tabula Valeria, a kind of panorama of the battle we had won against the armies of King Hieron of Syracuse some twenty-two years back; the kind of spectacle which you show to your country cousin when he comes on a visit.

Finally, there was the Rostra, or public tribune, the

cause of our present troubles; because every agitator takes it as an invitation to make speeches to the mob. Rome is supposed to be a republic governed by its citizens; and so, " Civis Romanus sum! " bellows every loafer and bum, every bankrupted farmer and unemployed artisan, and thinks that means that his person is inviolate, and he can stand up in the public square and denounce the authorities of his city. There under the very shadow of the Columna Rostrata, erected to celebrate the victory of our fleet over the Carthaginians, they will roar treason and sedition, covering themselves with the mantle of what they call " free speech " and " civil liberties "!

It is the plebs against the patricians; and this was the field day of the plebs, the great Apollinarian holiday. The striking artisans, the weavers and shipbuilders and pottery makers, had come swarming to the Forum. Their agents circulate among the idle and discontented, to say nothing of the criminal classes with which our city swarms. You have only to let such riff-raff listen to a few incendiary speeches, and they will be ready to grab up clubs and stones, scythes and spades and other implements, and set out to slay the rich and plunder their homes.

XLIV

THEY were just starting their so-called meeting when our party came in sight. The Forum was packed with people, and the agitators unfurled banners, which they fastened to poles and held aloft for all to read. " Potestas populi! " read one which faced us; and " Tyrannis

obsta! "—" Resist the tyrants," meaning, of course, we of the better class. Another was: " Pax, panis et terra! " or " Peace, land and bread," as I remember the modern Bolsheviks phrased it. Imagine such sentiments, exposed before the eyes of the landless and idle, in defiance of public authority! " Labor omnia fecit "—" Labour produces all wealth "—and so we, the masters, who furnish the capital and brains, are to be dispossessed by a rabble of labourers and ditch-diggers! That is what their programme really means, no matter how hard they may pretend they are merely resisting a cut in wages.

It is all I can do to keep from leaping from my seat and seizing one of the poles from those banner-bearers and belabouring them over the heads with it. I have to remind myself that I probably have a dislocated shoulder; also that I am in a dangerous position, because no doubt the leaders of this riot know that I was responsible for last night's raid. One of the banners reads: " Punish the murderers of Agri! " They will make all the capital they can out of the accident; their " hero and saint " has become a martyr, and orators up on the Rostra are bawling about his cruel fate.

It would not be so bad if this crowd consisted of Roman citizens; we could manage to cajole our own people, appealing to their patriotic pride. But since the ending of the World War, our desperate struggle with Carthage, our city has become the cynosure of all eyes, and swarms of foreigners come—peregrini, we call them—expecting to get a share of our wealth and prosperity: the scum of the earth, from every tribe known, bankrupted farmers, army deserters, runaway slaves and the sons of slaves. When they cannot find work, they expect to live upon public charity; they become the victims of every sort of agitator and demagogue, and the cause of an appalling crime wave,

before which our authorities seem to be helpless. I think we have made the greatest blunder of our history in permitting these hordes to overrun us; but now they are here, and at all cost we have to hold them in subjection.

The danger is made a thousand times more acute by the propaganda of Eunus. I don't know how much you know about this fanatical rebel: he was a slave, and I am told he is a healer and worker of miracles, though of course that may not be so; it is hard to judge the wild tales which come to us out of Sicily. This great island was part of the Greek Empire, but Eunus has seized it, and with a horde of revolting slaves, discontented workers, and soldiers left without employment by the ending of the Carthaginian war, he has set up a sort of communistic society, and hurled his challenge at what he calls the " capitalist class." That means Rome, for we are the headquarters of the new banking and big business developments; so we oppose Eunus, but only in a feeble, half-hearted way, carrying on propaganda against him and subsidizing various states to attack him. Sicily is an enormous island, and on account of its mountainous character, very difficult of access; therefore these proletarian rebels continue to labour and pile up the means of warfare against us.

It is the gravest menace in our history, according to my way of thinking, and I proclaim that sooner or later we shall have to go in and make a complete job of Eunus. These revolutionaries are cunning, and their agents go into every rich and prosperous country and incite revolts of the landless, and tell the artisans they are " exploited " by their masters. They take advantage of disputes with our workers, and try to magnify them into civil war. Their well-paid spies swarm in our capital, and we seem unable to root them out.

I know all about this, because our friend, Clarentus

Calvus, who controls a good part of the amphora industry, has a secret service which brings him the news. But I wouldn't need to do more than look at these banners which I see unfurled suddenly in the Forum. "Power to the people!" "Resist the tyrants!" "Peace, land, and bread!" "Labour produces all wealth!"—these are not Roman ideas, they would never have sprung into the heads of our God-fearing and law-abiding citizens. No, this is the Sicilian poison! It is the serpents of Eunus who have crawled into our city and whispered these incendiary phrases!

XLV

I WANT to warn our people; I have an impulse to stand up and shout: "Friends, Romans, countrymen! Lend me your ears!" But I remember that I have a bad shoulder, and I feel suddenly dizzy, and am not quite sure where I am, or whether that is the proper formula to shout in the Forum. I sink back into my cushions.

However, law and order are not to go undefended in Rome. There come sweeping up the street a company of our vigiles, the uniformed guards who serve the double purpose of policemen and firemen. They carry clubs, and at their head comes our fat and panting præfectus vigilium. All of a sudden I am back in Rivertown, and somehow it seems to me delightfully comical to discover Johnny O'Connell, easy-going old chief of police, dressed in a white robe with pink stripes, like a grand opera "supe," and shouting the riot act to a mob in classical Latin!

The vigiles fall to with their sticks, and the mob starts screaming, and backing into the square. I stand up, and observe the forces closing in upon the east and west sides also, and I realize the strategy of the move; they are going to pen the mob against the north side of the Forum, where the precipice blocks their exit, and the agitators can be sorted out and lodged in the State prison! A fine trap into which the rascals have blundered! This old Carcer Tullianus is built over a pit which used to be the quarry, and part of it is below the level of the ground, and its walls are of lava rock, as hard as any in the Italian peninsula!

Evidently the authorities mean business, for behind the vigiles comes a detachment of footmen of the Legion, with their bronze cuirasses and helmets, and the short, double-bladed swords which have taught the enemies of Rome to respect us. I see the captain of this company, one of my former "rookies," and he hails Rufus Hanno and his companion, Picus, and bids them follow him. I know what he wants of them—to point out the agents of Eunus in that crowd.

I am so excited that I want to shout to our boys to go to it. My father is doing that, and so is my grandfather, and Professor Polibe—that is a slip of the tongue, of course, I mean Polybius, the historian, who is strong for law and order, and insists that we Romans must subdue our mob if the Republic is to endure. I see the strike leaders upon the Rostra trying to go on with their oratory, and I see the vigiles drag them down and overpower them. I am beside myself with delight—until suddenly comes a shock. Another speaker leaps upon the platform, and I realize that it is a woman, a fair-haired girl from somewhere in the North, young, with finely chiselled, aristocratic features —it is Marcia Penna!

She moves her lips, and I know she is speaking, though

I cannot hear a sound amid the uproar. She goes on, with defiant gestures; and suddenly I see one of the policemen leap upon the platform and hurl her head first into the throng. Then all at once things begin to grow black before me, and I realize that my shoulder is burning like fire, and that the Forum Romanum magnum is going round and round. They tell me I fell over sideways, upon the shoulder of one of my slaves.

XLVI

Once more I have to tell this tale as 'twas told to me, for now I was unconscious in both worlds—a delirium inside a delirium, a very curious thing. They carried me quickly away, my elders reproaching themselves for having failed to realize my condition. It so happened that we were close to the home of the medicus Arcagathus, a grandson of that famous surgeon who had come to Rome from Peloponnesus and made his fortune attending our aristocracy. He conducted what he called a "nosocomium," which was a Greek institution, a place where one took care of the sick; a new fashion with us Romans, as we always preferred our own homes, where our womenfolk could attend us, with the help of our servants.

But now I was near the nosocomium, and my grandfather looked it over, and found it a comfortable and proper place for a senator's heir to be. The plausible old medicus urged that it would be dangerous to carry me farther. He was really a high-class fellow, reputed to make half a million sesterces every year. He had taken the famous

oath of Hippocrates, and was very conscientious about teaching his arts to others; I had heard my grandfather narrate, with much laughter, how Arcagathus travelled to his patients with a score of pupils in his train, and they arrived on a cold winter's day, all of them half frozen, when the senator, ill of a fever, had to have his pulse held by a score of icy hands.

Well, this great physician set my dislocated shoulder-blade, and dressed my cuts with his ointments, and then bled me profusely. In spite of that, or because of it, I remained in a state of unconsciousness, or partly broken consciousness for two days. During that period a series of events took place which should interest the psychologists.

I lay upon a bed, in a cubiculum in the upper story of the hospital, and because it was a hot day in the month of Quinctilis, a slave stood by my head and fanned me with a fan made of peacocks' feathers. At intervals all day came my mother and two sisters to pray for my recovery. The Romans did not kneel when they prayed; they stood erect, with hands uplifted towards the dwelling-places of whatever gods seemed likely to take an interest in the case. First my mother, and then my two sisters in her company, made a pilgrimage to the temple of Æsculapius, the god of healing, and prayed there before the shrine; then they came to the hospital, bringing two of the Asclepidæ, priests of the temple, who stood over me and invoked the aid of the divinity in loud and commanding voices.

At this time, here is what was actually happening to the real Luke Faber, according to the account which my parents afterwards gave me. I was lying in a private room of the Rivertown Hospital, under the care of our family physician, Dr. Arch Agathus, the Viennese. Because it was a hot day in July an electric fan was kept

going over my head. My mother and two sisters, Grace and Amy, came two and three times daily, and knelt for long periods at my bedside to pray for my recovery. My mother, and my sisters under her instruction, take their religion with old-time simplicity; they do not believe that miracles stopped happening in the second century after Christ, but accept literally His statement that if you believe on Him you can heal the sick. In other words, Jesus is their Æsculapius, and they call upon Him with personal directness, and even imperiousness; for mother has something of the attitude of that French aristocrat who said that God would think twice before damning a gentleman like him. Is it conceivable that a truly benevolent Creator would permit a scion of the Fabers of Rivertown to be killed in a vulgar automobile race?

Because the promise runs, " where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them," my devoted mother always makes her appeals in company. She summoned the Rev. Dr. Featherway from his vacation, and also his head assistant, Dr. Bull, and these put on their full regimentals, lending authority to the petitions. Again and again they went through the Order for the Visitation of the Sick; enough was never enough for my frantic parent—and it was hers to command, for had she not contributed to St. Thomas's the most beautiful of stained glass windows, with her name underneath it on a bronze tablet?

While the others knelt about the bedside, old Dr. Featherway stood up, lifting his trembling hands into the air and pronouncing the venerable invocation: " Remember not, Lord, our iniquities, nor the iniquities of our forefathers: Spare us, good Lord, spare thy people, whom Thou hast redeemed with Thy most precious blood, and be not angry with us for ever." Then

all the others murmured: " Spare us, good Lord! "—and went on taking turns in the appeal, first the minister, and then the kneeling women:

Oh, Lord, save thy servant:
Who putteth his trust in Thee.
Send him help from Thy holy place;
And evermore mightily defend him.
Let the enemy have no advantage of him;
Nor the wicked approach to hurt him.
Be unto him, Lord, a strong tower;
From the face of his enemy.
O Lord, hear our prayer,
And let our cry come unto Thee.

It so happened that at one time while this service was being read, Father Rafferty, the Catholic priest, was making his round of the hospital. He does not visit Dr. Featherway's church, nor does Featherway stoop to be aware of his; but the hospital is neutral ground, where the champions of rival faiths are polite to each other. Father Rafferty knows the Fabers for many reasons—for example, he calls me on the 'phone and tells me of some good old Irishman with a family who needs a job as night-watchman. So now he asked, very gently, if he might be allowed to join in the petition to the Throne of Grace. The others were equally polite; and so after the Episcopal service was finished, the Catholic was begun:

Adjiciat Dominus super vos;
Super vos, et super filios vestros.
Benedicti vos a Domino:
Qui fecit cœlum et terram.
Qui timent Dominum speraverunt in Domino:
Adjutor eorum et protector eorum est.

It was curious, but the Catholic seemed to win out in this competition. Perhaps it was because at this time my mind was in Rome and I was thinking in Latin; anyhow, it was at the end of Father Rafferty's efforts that I showed the first signs of returning consciousness. I stirred, and muttered a few words, which they treasured in memory. They were Latin words, and everyone, of course, attributed this to the Catholic prayers. The first word was " penna," several times repeated. My mother knew nothing about Marcia Penny; this hospital was the girl's place of employment, but she was not there at this particular moment—she was in jail, having been arrested while attempting to speak at the mass meeting in Central Square.

I would say " penna," and then I would say " pennavia," and that also meant nothing—since no one had the wit to realize that it was the Latin translation of Featherway! Again, I would say " penna pavonis," which means a peacock's feather—but how could my distracted mother and sisters guess that at this moment I was in ancient Rome, having my fevered forehead cooled with a fan made of peacocks' feathers? The psychologists tell us that the subconscious mind delights in puns and riddles. Well, here was a fine set for any soothsayer to interpret!

XLVII

In the meantime, what was my Roman mother doing? She had summoned to my bed the head priest of the Asclepidæ, whose name was Pennavia, and his assistant, Taurus, and these two came in their full regimentals, and

stood with their hands in the air and invoked the favour of the Mighty One. They called upon Him to be merciful, they expressed submission and reverence, using the words which pain-stricken man has employed in the presence of the terrible unknown since the first language was invented. The worshippers made their responses, as they have done since the first stones were piled to make an altar :

O Lord, save Thy servant;
Who putteth his trust in Thee.
Send him help from Thy holy place;
And evermore mightily defend him.

And when these prayers were not answered, when I lay in my stupor, unmoving, the terrified women cast about for other recourses, and bethought themselves of a still mightier god, Apollo, the father of Æsculapius, and therefore the original god of medicine, the oulios—health-giver—the iatromantis—seer—of the Greeks. Also, he was the god of youth, the " rearer of boys," and he was the patron of the athletes; it had been for his games that I had paid, both with my money and my health, and so, manifestly, he was the one to save me. He had a great temple in Rome, and my mother and sisters paid a visit to it, and brought back with them Raffertius, the chief sacerdos, who also stood over my pallet and raised his hands in invocation. Because Apollo is a terrible person, the " god of the silver bow," the " far-shooter," the invocations of this priest and the responses of his followers were more tinged with awe—as they have been to all terrible gods since the dawn of time. They cringed before him as their judge, and cried that those who feared Him had hope of His mercy :

Qui timent Dominum speraverunt in Domino:
Adjutor eorum et protector eorum est.

And once more it was proven that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom; for it was while this priest of Apollo was praying over me that I began to give the first signs of consciousness. I stirred, and muttered a few words, which they treasured carefully. The first word was "Featherway," and of course they could make nothing of that; nor when I said "Jerry Fields" had they any means of guessing that this was the name of the labour leader, Agri, who had been killed the night before last, and was now a cause of rioting among the artisans. Their oracles were accustomed to speak in riddles and puns, and their priests and soothsayers made many efforts to interpret these strange sounds, but quite in vain.

XLVIII

I SANK back into coma again, in spite of all their efforts; and my poor distracted mother continued her pilgrimages to shrines. She went again to the island in the Tiber where the temple to Æsculapius stood, and she slept there overnight in order that the god might reveal to her in a dream what was the way of cure for her son. This was a custom which in later days became a source of much corruption and scandal, but the present was still the time of the Republic, when the best families had kept the sternness of their ancestors, and it cast no blemish upon the mistress of a great household that she should sleep before the shrine of a god.

Our family had every right to make use of that temple, because we had contributed to its building, and upon the wall was a bronze tablet bearing the name of one of my

ancestors, telling in reverent language of the cure which had been vouchsafed to him, and exactly how it had been achieved. The god had instructed him as to the remedy for a severe case of dyspepsia. He was to confine his diet to bread and cheese, and parsley with lettuce; he was to drink citron lemonade and milk with honey; he was to rub himself with sand, and wash himself in hot water with wine in it; he was to pay the bath attendant one drachma, and he was also to pay the priest. Doing all these things, he was cured, and paid his devout thanks to the god.

Also there was the tablet of a great-uncle, telling how he had severely burned his hand, and been miraculously healed by the god with no pain whatever. There was a statue representing Æsculapius raising a man from the dead—for are not all things possible to the gods? Surrounded with these evidences of marvels, my mother slept—and afterwards she told me about her dream, which was quite incomprehensible to her. She had seen me perfectly well, and riding in what appeared to be a chariot, but was like no chariot she had ever seen, for it moved without horses, and at extraordinary speed, around the track; this chariot was painted with the Cometes colours, orange and green, and I had waved to her an orange and green banner of some sort. I had seemed so happy and carefree that she took it for a good omen, and hurried home, to find me with my eyes open and ready to hear about it!

I explained to her that I also had had the same dream —I had had many such miraculous dreams. The chariot she had seen was a kind which men would drive in the future; the god had revealed this to me, and told me that it would be called an automobile, a most objectionable kind of word, half Greek and half Latin. I tried to

explain how this chariot would be moved without magic, but I found it was too much for her mind, and I decided I had better cut short my revelations, else I would get myself the name of a miracle worker, which is not good form among the patrician class; we are accustomed to leave miracles to the duly appointed priesthood, and to Greek mystagogues and founders of cults.

You would be astonished to know how much of this kind of thing is going on in Rome. They come from Egypt and from Hispania, and all ports in between. There are whole streets in our city given up to the temples of foreign gods, and to soothsayers and venders of oracles, and astrologers and clairvoyants and healers of all sorts. Our ladies of fashion experience pious thrills in the presence of priests and prophets of Cybele and Bacchus, Isis and Osiris, Ma of Phrygia, Baal of the Phœnicians, and the bloody Jehovah of the Jews. It is one of the signs of our intellectual and social decay.

While I am on the subject, I ought to add that my American mother did not have as good success in her prayers as did my Roman mother. In the Rivertown Hospital I lapsed back into my coma, and stayed for some twenty days, and no prayers were answered during that time. My mother went both day and night to St. Thomas's, and prayed and wept for me; she knelt in front of the stained glass window which she had donated—not praying to the window, of course, but choosing this spot because it represented Jesus raising Lazarus from the dead. Possibly it may have seemed to her a tactful way of reminding God of the fact that she had paid the cost of this lovely window in His honour.

When still no answer came, the distracted woman cast aside her denominational and social prejudices and went to St. Anne's Roman Catholic church, and prayed there.

St. Anne was, as you may know, a healing saint, so it seemed especially appropriate. Mother would not pray to this saint, nor to the Holy Virgin, but she would pray before an image of Jesus anywhere; and if she paid a donation to Father Rafferty, and he chose to spend part of it in burning candles before the shrines of St. Anne and the Holy Virgin, that would not hurt me, and mother was perfectly willing for it to help me if it could. After all, we poor mortals are groping in darkness, and there is always a possibility that we may have chosen the wrong god or the wrong minister to appeal to Him.

XLIX

The medicus Arcagathus had ordered me to sleep, but I could not, and sent a nurse to summon him to my bedside. He came, very fussy because his orders were not obeyed. You know how these modern doctors presume to be persons of social importance, and take on the manner of busy men of affairs. Arcagathus was a lively old fellow with a closely trimmed white beard and moustache, dressed with elegant neatness; you would have thought him one of those capitalists who have their offices on the west side of the Forum, and half a dozen secretaries to attend to their correspondence, and are accustomed to wave their hand and cause buildings to arise, or a fleet of ships to set out for the East.

"Now what is this, fili mi?" he began.

Having been our family physician, and known me from childhood, he presumes to this familiarity.

"I have something I must have attended to," I said.

"Well, get it out quickly, or I shall have to give you a sleeping potion."

"You have in your employ a young woman by the name of Marcia Penna——"

It was amusing, even to me in my weakened condition, to see the sudden change in the manner of Arcagathus. No longer was he the master of men, but the cringing Greek, with a note of terror in his voice.

"Lucius Faber, I swear to you I knew nothing about the activities of that hussy! She came to me with very good recommendation; her father had been the steward of the elder Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus. It was the wife of that great citizen who asked me to employ her, and you know that noble lady, belonging to the house of the Corneleii Scipiones——"

"Yes," I thought to myself, "we shall get something on that Scipio crowd yet!"

"Believe me, fili mi, that creature shall never enter my establishment again——"

"That is just what I want her to do," I stopped him. "I want you to fetch her and keep her here, so that I can see her conveniently."

The old boy's face took on a new expression—a slowly spreading smile. "So, Lucius, you young rascal! But I assure you it will be some time before you can have anything to do with a woman; and I cannot have things like that going on in my hospital."

"No, no, doctor," I said; "it is not that. I assure you I have no such relation to this woman. It is a matter of great importance—a State affair, in short. I hope to get some information from her."

"Oh, I see! I see!" Again the mobile Greek face changed. He was all excitement now. "You are after those seditionists!"

" I want the young woman to come here, as a matter of course, and as if nothing had happened; and I want you to say nothing to anyone else about the matter."

" But how can she come, Lucius? They tell me she has been thrown into jail."

" There is a way to get her out, I think. If you will bring me a pen and some parchment I will write a note."

" And then you will go to sleep, my son? Remember your parents are holding me responsible for you."

" Then I will go to sleep, I promise you."

A servant brought me writing materials, and I composed a flattering letter to Clarentus Calvus, congratulating him upon the success of his campaign against the outside agitators. Then I told him, in strict confidence, that I had the possibility of getting important information from the girl, Marcia Penna, who had been arrested at the Forum. He would, of course, not expect me to go into details by letter, but I asked him to obtain her release on bail, and said that I would refund the money to him as soon as I could attend to affairs. I asked that Marcia be brought to Arcagathus, who had been her employer, and I undertook to assume responsibility for her behaviour. I sealed this letter, and the physician agreed to have it delivered at once into the hands of the manufacturer of amphoræ.

I could rest now, because my mind was no longer tormented by the image of Marcia in that horrible Carcer Tullianus. It is mostly underground, and the rocks are full of springs, and the walls dripping wet; it is a dungeon made to break the spirit of the most dreadful criminals —parricides and traitors to the State. I should have been perfectly willing for all agents of Eunus to rot and mould there, but I could not bear to think of this misguided girl sharing such a fate.

L

When I opened my eyes again it was night, and they brought me a cup of goat's milk, very strong-tasting, and therefore supposed to be good for you. There are more of these modern diet fads than you can keep track of; with the abnormal lives people are living here in Rome, rushing about from one social function to another, stuffing themselves with every sort of costly food, and getting no exercise, they soon ruin their health, and are ready to listen to every quack who has a new scheme to avert the consequences of their folly. Such is the modern age.

Presently my brother is sitting by my bedside; and I am glad, of course, for at a time like this I appreciate affection. I stretch out my well hand to him, and he says: "Salve, puer magne," which I suppose might be rendered: "Hello, big boy!"—for Quintus spends his time collecting the most up-to-date slang, and horrifying the family with it.

"So you're going to stay with us a while yet!" he says; and assures me solemnly that three different schools of medicine are quarrelling for the honour of having saved my life, and there will be ex-voto inscriptions in several temples. He narrates what my mother and sisters have done—in a mocking vein, of course, for he finds the cults of all gods equally comical, our ancient Roman ones as well as the newly imported. He has been to Greece, and studied in the schools of the philosophers, who have taught him that all things in the universe happen according to law—which these wise men, forsooth, pretend to understand. All is mechanical, a chain of causes and effects, like the grinding of a grain-mill, and there are no heavenly powers to interfere with the remorseless wheels.

But I am in no mood for controversy now, so I let his unseemly jesting pass, and ask him about what has happened in Rome since I fell into my sleep. It seems that the artisans, incensed by the breaking up of their assembly in the Forum, have withdrawn themselves and their families to the Sacer Mons, a hill on the far side of the Tiber river; this is a sanctuary, and they hope we shall not dare to invade it. My brother is inclined to sympathize with them, saying they got a raw deal at their meeting. Why shouldn't the poor devils have a right to demand a living wage? Again I refrain from argument.

I remember that Calvus told me they were planning some such move, to get the power of the gods on their side. I ask Quintus if he knows what the authorities have decided to do, and he says that father has been attending conferences at the Curia, but he does not know what the decision has been. Of course it must be highly disturbing to the industry of our city to have these skilled workers withdrawn; not merely are we left without their labour, but our merchants will miss their trade. I can understand that Calvus must be especially furious, because his amphora industry meets with severe competition from other cities, where the jars are made with cheap labour and shipped to Rome by sea. He and his associates have been clamouring for an import duty, a " portorium," to protect our home workers against this kind of thing. Quintus laughs at the idea of Calvus having any care about those who work in his factory.

I ask how the strikers expect to live on the Sacred Mount, and my brother tells me he does not know, but father thinks there are members of the wealthy classes who are secretly in sympathy with the plebs, and are sending them supplies. I point out what is far more likely, that the rebels are getting gold from Eunus. My brother hoots at

this; for it is the fashion of our so-called " liberals " to talk as if Eunus did not exist, and his conspiracy against the propertied class were a myth of our invention.

I ask if my name has been mentioned in connection with the death of Agri. Quintus answers that the authorities know it, but if the plebs know it, they cannot prove it. Bobbius Julius, our prætor, has come back from his holiday in the country to face a storm of opposition because of his dilatory policy; there is a bitter struggle going on in the Curia, but my brother tells me not to bother my head with it to-night, I must sleep, and get back my strength. I realize that he is trying to hide something from me, but I do not care especially—I have lost my ambition, and am willing to leave the handling of affairs to my elders.

LI

When I open my eyes again, there is dawn in the cubiculum, and a chill; but my head is hot, and there is a racking pain in my shoulder. I am not sure whether I am really awake, or in some new delirium; for there in the room, near the doorway, stands Marcia Penna, very still, pale, and cold as a marble statue of Diana, the special goddess of the plebs. Her eyes are fixed upon me, and hold me as if I were hypnotized. I think: " Yes, this is all right. Marcia was supposed to come here." I want to say her name, but my lips are dry, and do not move.

She goes to a table at the side of the room and brings me a drink of water. Then she takes a damp cloth and wipes my hot forehead and my face and eyes. It feels good; her touch is extraordinarily soothing. I have had such

things done for me by mother and sisters, and by servants of our household, but never before by a woman of this sort, a professional nurse of the sick, and I am not used to the idea, and don't know just how to take it. I find it so pleasant, I do not want to realize that it is paid for and strictly impersonal.

Without a word she goes out and brings me a glass of that strong-tasting goat's milk, cold, as if it had come out of a spring-house. She watches while I drink it; then she says: " The physician will be here soon." Her voice is as cold as her features, and I think I know what she is saying to herself. Just one word: " Murderer! "

She stands waiting, and I say: " Sit down, Marcia."

" Nurses do not sit while on duty," she replies.

" Well, I ask you to sit," I say. " I will assume responsibility with the medicus."

There are two chairs in the room, one near the head of the bed, and the other far. She takes the far one, and waits for me to speak.

" Have you nothing to say to me? " I ask at last.

" I suppose you expect me to thank you for getting me out of jail. But first I have to know on what terms the favour is done."

" Did you find it so pleasant in the Tullianum? "

" They did not keep us there. They took us to the city prison. There were too many of us."

" How many were there? "

" Some forty."

" Judging from the crowd you had in the Forum, I should have thought there would be four hundred."

" You have efficient spies, apparently."

I could not help smiling. " They got the right ones, did they? "

Again there was silence.

" Perhaps I ought to say this," said the woman suddenly. " I made you a promise and I kept it. I have not named you as responsible for the killing of Agri, and I have seen that my brother has done the same. If that is why you brought me here, make yourself at ease."

" That wasn't the reason, Marcia."

" What was it, then? "

I smiled again, hoping to melt a little of the ice in her manner. " I guess being ill has weakened me. I couldn't bear to think of you being in prison."

" You will get your strength back," she replied; " then you will be a good Roman. You will realize that what is right for my friends is right for me."

I started to plead. " Marcia, you are misguided! You cannot go on associating with such people! "

" You know nothing about them, and merely talk nonsense. There are great souls among them; the worst are victims of tragic and terrible fates. But you do not know anything about it, and would scorn to learn; so stop wasting your time trying to separate me from my party. I am going on with my efforts to help the workers so long as I have breath."

" I must tell you, Marcia; I have taken the liberty of assuring the authorities that you will behave yourself while you are out on bail."

For the first time there were signs of emotion in her face. " You had no right to make any such promise. I shall not keep it! "

" They will only take you back to jail."

" Let them take me at once."

" But what can you do in jail? "

" There is no use trying to explain such things to a patrician."

Really, there was not. I looked at her, frankly puzzled.

" You think you can help your cause by rotting in the city prison? "

" A Roman aristocrat does not understand moral forces," she replied. " Therefore I shall not try to explain the working class movement. Besides, I am supposed to be here as a nurse, and the first of my duties is to see that my patient does not become excited. I will ask Dr. Arcagathus to put some other nurse on this case."

" No, no! " I said hastily. " Don't do that! I will promise to be good, and not argue any more, nor even try to understand. But please be quiet, just for a day or two, and don't insist upon going back to prison! "

LII

The medicus came in; he had been listening in the passage, as I found out later. He told me that my fever was a result of having failed to have my injury attended to promptly, and he scolded me because I did not show sufficient submissiveness to his learning. He was a stern master, and I suppose it was what I needed; anyhow, I promised to forget that I was the scion of a great family, and to abase myself before the shrines of Æsculapius and Apollo, and the votive tablets of Hippocrates and Arcagathus of Peloponnesus—whose learned grandson was their pontifex maximus and oracle! I was to have goat's milk and the juices of oranges and lemons, but no solid food, and I was to ask no questions about public affairs, and permit no one to talk to me about them. Marcia Penna was placed in authority over me, and I settled back, very well content, for I knew it meant a truce with those

terrible " moral forces " which I could not comprehend. Meantime the labour struggle might get itself over with, and the girl would not insist upon returning to the grim city prison alongside the cattle-market!

So for two days I played the sick child, and Marcia played the mother. I noted that when my real mother came, or my sisters, she was not in the room; and I was quick-witted enough to realize that this was possibly not an entirely professional attitude. I did my best to keep my promise and not think about public affairs; but I could not help speculating about " moral forces," and what there was wrong with us Romans, who had become the masters of the whole world, the richest and most powerful and most envied of nations, and thought ourselves the most righteous and worthy of emulation. It was an act of great condescension on my part to entertain such a question. But there I lay, a little child who had been scolded, and was trying to understand his ancilla, who was beautiful, but proud and silent, and strictly professional in her attitude.

" Can she really feel that way about me? " I kept thinking. Could she be indifferent to the fact that I was Lucius Faber, grandson of one of the greatest senators, and son of one of the richest capitalists of Rome? And if she was really unmoved by the presence of my handsome and masterful self, did that really mean that she was greater than I? Or did it mean that she was mentally perverted, and that I was deluded in subjecting my mind to hers? Hardly the best thoughts for one who was trying to throw off a fever and mend some ligaments and shoulder-joints!

Members of my family came daily, and their prayers were offered for me, but I told them nothing about the danger to their pride and glory which was lurking in this

nosocomium, and they had no way to guess it. They were engaged in hiding from me a complicated series of events in the political world, and meanwhile took me for a man fevered and exhausted, who slept a great deal and had no thoughts of any importance.

They would go away, and Marcia would return, and I would follow her about with my eyes, and think: "What can they be expecting to accomplish in the world? And how am I going to get her away from them, so that she will not get up on public platforms, and be thrown off by policemen, and dragged to prison cells. Such conduct is madness, and I shall not let it go on. But how am I to stop it?"

She remained cold and reserved, apparently unaware of the struggle going on in my soul, or else indifferent to it. I would think: "She has condemned me as a murderer, and now she is nailing me to a cross." So we used to do with rebellious slaves; and I would become such a slave and try to escape the torment. I would say: "Virago contumacissima—what does she mean, daring to pass judgment upon a Faber! Let her go back to her cell, along with the rats and serpents of Eunus!"

It was in the midst of one of these crises that Hortensia Manlia and her mother came to visit me. My own dear mother had suggested this, thinking it would please me; and, of course, what could I say but yes? Hortensia and her parents had come up from the seashore to attend the Ludi Apollinares, and now they were staying on account of anxiety about me. The two ladies seated themselves, and smiled upon me benevolently; Hortensia was gentle, dropping no hint of reproach, but wishing me a speedy recovery, and telling me how greatly she had admired my driving skill, until the accident to the chariot had dashed my hopes. She went on to retail the gossip of Ostia; who

was visiting whom among our friends, and what entertainments were being given.

I knew that I ought to be grateful, because mother and daughter were doing me a high honour. But all the time what was in the depths of my soul was this: " No, I do not really love Hortensia Manlia. I promised to marry her because it would please my revered parents; and of course I must please my parents—but meanwhile, what on earth am I to say to her? "

LIII

My father came to visit me. His office was not far from the nosocomium, so it was easy for him. He greeted me affectionately, congratulated me upon my escape, and tactfully assured me that I was held to have acquitted myself with honour in the circus. When I asked about the family conference, and what had come of the killing of Agri, he answered casually that the matter was not a serious one; there were always attacks to be expected from political enemies, but the family tower would stand intact. I realized that he was sparing a sick man, for I knew that Bobbius Julius must be fiercely resentful of my having usurped his functions and forced his hand. Even though he might follow the lead we had given him, and crush the labour rebellion, he would at the same time endeavour to placate the plebs by denouncing the hated patricians. But when one's father has made plain that he does not wish to be questioned, a dutiful son keeps silence.

My fever abated, and the pain in my shoulder diminished, and my kind parent said that it would soon

be possible to move me. This raised a serious problem, for I did not want to be separated from Marcia, and there was no pretext I could find to bring her to my parents' home. So I began to make excuses; I said that I was very comfortable here, and thought it would be wiser to stay near this excellent medicus. The moving was bound to be a strain on my shoulder.

My father said that he had planned to take me to Ostia by means of our yacht. I could be carried to it on a litter, and would not have to sit up. With help of Father Tiber, and a dozen strong rowers, I would be at our summer villa in four hours. But I tactfully begged my father to postpone this move, and urged that the family should not wait for me, but should return to the shore at its own convenience. It would be wiser for me to remain here, because, when I was well enough, I could see the manager of my factory, and transact my affairs. I would be hard put to it, I said with a smile, to persuade the public to buy Cometes chariots after our ill success in the races. My father went on to say that if I found myself in need of funds, I should not hesitate to call upon him. For this I thanked him, but said it was not that bad.

We talked about the business situation. Immediately following the great war—it was now eight years after the destruction of Carthage—Rome had suffered a period of disorganization and financial insecurity; but then affairs had begun to pick up, and we were now in the midst of an extraordinary boom. Our great joint stock companies had never in all history known such prosperity, and the increase in value of their securities was beyond belief.

Most of our economic authorities consider that the rise is permanent; they say that we have at last escaped from the evil influence of the so-called business cycle, and that Rome has seen its last financial panic.

But my father, always anxious, and looking at the worst side of things, points out the orgy of speculation which has seized the capital. He watches all his investments, and is by no persuasion to be drawn into the wild schemes for new copper developments in Hispania, and new irrigation projects on the upper Nilus. Let us keep our capital at home, he says, and develop our own land, whose resources cannot be taken from us by any enemy.

My mother and elder sister have come in while this discussion is under way, and they sit and listen respectfully. But Gratia is a person with ideas of her own—after the fashion of these modern young ladies. She has been drawn into the worship of the goddess of Peace, whose votaries now have a temple. Inspired by these teachings, Gratia ventures to raise her voice in the most august company. To be sure she does it very gently—having read the books of an Athenian philosopher, telling about the old-time rhetor, Socrates, who carried on his teaching by means of questions.

" Father," says Gratia, " who is this enemy that we have to fear? "

" I do not know, my daughter," says our revered parent; " but the lesson of history is that a new enemy always arises to dispute world power."

" But, father," says the inquisitive female, " was it not declared to us by our great statesmen that the struggle with Carthage was the war to end war? "

" Some may have said that, my dear; but it is not possible for the best-meaning statesmen to repeal the laws of human societies."

" But then, father, are we to say that one cannot believe the solemn pledges of the best-meaning statesmen when they ask us to support them? "

Says our wise progenitor: " It was a dreadful war,

Gratia, and the balance was in doubt for long years. I think it is the part of wisdom for us to give thanks to the immortal gods that we won it, and not inquire too closely into the devices we were forced to employ."

LIV

My brother Quintus comes each day. Being a young man of leisure, able to follow his own sweet will, Quintus is accustomed to ramble about from one summer resort to the next, and indulge himself in sport, and in artistic and literary pursuits. His wife being away, and their children in care of a sister-in-law, Quintus is free in every way that the most modern standards require, and in the fashionable society of Rome are many ladies of advanced ideas who are glad to divert a charming young patrician. His conversation reeks with the sophistication of this so-called " smart set," which prides itself upon always knowing the very latest thing, and being in every possible way beyond the comprehension of the ordinary mortal.

My brother has spent several years, off and on, wandering among the isles of Greece. He has inspected the works of old-time sculptors and painters; he has visited strange temples—not as a worshipper, of course, but from æsthetic motives, regarding the temple as a work of architecture. He has sat in the porticos of philosophers, and taken part in their disputes. He has witnessed the Olympian games, and the dramatic festivals at Athens, and has come back as completely hellenized as if we had never forced Philip of Macedon to submit to our will. A most peculiar phenomenon, this; it would appear that

conquests of arms are really of no significance, and that these people whom we have made our vassals are going to overpower us intellectually, and force us to adopt their standards of manners, morals, and taste.

No longer does one have to travel in order to encounter this Eastern corruption. Their priests have come to Rome, bringing their gods in the hold of a ship. Their philosophers have come, followed by slaves staggering under loads of books and manuscript rolls. Their dramatists and musicians and dancers, architects and sculptors and painters, all are here, and they alone know how to do anything excellently, and they will do it for us—for a price! Even when they are slaves we have to pay, bidding against one another for their skill. Our homes are full of them, for they know how to beautify houses, how to conduct elegant entertainments, how to rear and educate children. The result is that our young people can jabber in Greek more fluently than in Latin.

It is the fashion to ridicule the ideas of the late departed Cato the Censor, but I agree with him fully that this is a menace to our civilization, and should at all hazards be stopped. For along with their arts, these Greeks bring their tricky ways, their softness and slyness and viciousness; they corrupt our very infants in the cradle. They are a degenerate race, wholly unfit to survive or to govern. We Romans conquered them, because of the stern virtue we inherited from our ancestors; we laugh now at that virtue, calling it provincialism—but that is only a measure of the extent to which the poison has spread in our thinking.

No longer are we satisfied with anything we do. We must get a Greek to show us how to build a temple, and what god to worship in it; we must have Greeks to cure our diseases, to compose our histories, and show us how

to write plays. We are merely a lot of dull-witted soldiers and traders, money-changers and keepers of accounts; we don't understand the high and fine things of life, and when we try to express ourselves in any of the arts, we make ourselves the laughing-stock of the world. Our idea of having a good time is to assemble in banquet-halls with gold and silver dishes, and eat more costly food than ever was seen on a table before; to get drunk on old Falernian wines, and roar out drinking-songs about how we have licked the world, and are sitting on top of it.

Thus my brother Quintus; and because I still have some fever in my blood, and am ordered to keep quiet, I make no reply, and let the Bacchantes have their way in Rome. But all the time I am thinking: "Some day I am going to sit in the Senate in my grandfather's place, and when I do, the first law I shall propose will be one to limit the immigration of foreigners into the Italian peninsula. The second will be a law imposing a tax upon all foreigners engaged in any profession or art, all teachers, rhetoricians, actors, dramatists, poets, painters, sculptors, dancers, singers —the whole smart-aleck crew; and believe me, it will be a tax that will send a lot of them back where they came from, and leave our native land with some part of its ancestral dignities."

I have said all this to Quintus in days past, and he has a mocking phrase with which he answers me: "There ought to be a law!" There ought to be a law to forbid this, and a law to forbid that! My clever young brother apparently does not think there ought to be any laws at all; everybody ought to be allowed to do what he or she pleases, and our great Republic ought to be allowed to go to ruin, because nobody has the sense to see what is happening to us.

LV

THERE is a time, when you have been sick and are getting back your strength, when you have most delicious feelings. You are very hungry, and everything tastes good, and all life assumes a rosy hue. So it was now in the nosocomium. Marcia was there, with a rainbow about her head; gentle, quiet and lovely, everything that a perfect attendant should be. Oh, why could I not have her to wait upon me always!

She came, bringing me a letter, and I took both the letter and the hand that held it. She drew the hand away, firmly, and said: "That is no part of a nurse's duty."

"Marcia," I said, "the Alexandrian poets are accustomed to represent the god of love as a mischievous boy with a bow and arrow, and this I thought an unworthy degradation of religious symbolism. But now that it has happened to me, I am able to understand better, and it does not seem so humorous or fantastic. Truly, it is like receiving a very severe wound: much worse than a dislocated shoulder. It is quite staggering. I am serious about it."

"You want to put me in the place of Virginia Tullia and Hortensia Manlia?" she inquired coldly.

"Try to be fair to me," I said. "Hortensia was the decision of my parents. It is their command that I should marry and continue the Faber line."

"And does she know that she is being taken in that spirit?"

"It is the spirit in which Roman marriages are made."

" Well, Lucius Faber, I am in revolt against that spirit, and it is not likely that you and I will agree on the question, any more than we do as to the right of the labour guilds."

" I have been unhappy about my situation for a long time, Marcia; and since I have met you, I have found myself thinking that I could not go on with that marriage."

" And what about Virginia? "

" I was drawn into that affair more through pity than through love; and I have known for a long time that I must end it."

" But you waited till you had found somebody you liked better? "

" Well, what——" I began; but then I stopped, with an uneasy feeling that I did not know how to argue with this strange woman.

There was a silence.

" The truth is this," she remarked. " You have had Virginia, and so you consider her your inferior. If you could get another woman, you would adopt the same attitude to her. Such are you patrician men. But now you have met someone who will never be your inferior."

It was not encouraging. I took a while to think it over. Then I said: " Marcia, I am trying to understand a new set of ideas. Apparently you do not accept the principle of our religion, that the gods have made women to be subjected to men."

" No, I do not accept that."

" You are not afraid to defy the gods? "

" You will probably not be willing for me to wait upon you after I tell you that I don't believe that any such gods exist."

" No," I said, " my brother also has been to Greece."

"I did not get my ideas from Greeks, but from Romans."

"It is a disturbing thing," I said, "to have to doubt what one has learned to worship."

"The less you think about it, Lucius Faber, the better for your happiness as a future senator of capitalist Rome. You are nearly well enough to go now, and you would be wise to return to your devoted parents, and marry the right sort of wife for a wealthy gentleman, and continue to put disturbers of the peace into jail—or to hit them over the heads with a club."

Again there was a pause.

"My dear," I said, "your advice is undoubtedly both wise and honest; and it is to my sorrow that I do not accept it."

"But I am going to make you accept it so far as concerns me. I am going to remove myself from your presence."

"Listen, Marcia," I pleaded. "You took offence at me at our first meeting because I did not know what would be the ideas about love of rebels such as yourself. Please explain them to me. Are the partisans of the plebs, who make Diana your goddess, pledged to her ideal of the celibate life?"

"Not at all," she responded.

"Then tell me, what is it that gives a man the right to offer you his love?"

"Any man has the right to offer. Whether his offer is accepted depends upon my wishes. I will elect a man whose ideas of life are in harmony with my own, so that there is some chance of affection and understanding between us. There being no such possibility in the case of you and me, I advise you sincerely to forget me."

"Then," said I, groping through this fog, "in order

that you should love me, it would be necessary that I should become a friend of the plebs, and espouse the right of the labour guilds to dominate Rome? "

" In order that I should love you, Lucius Faber, it would be necessary that you should abandon your pride of caste and financial power. Therefore you are making a mistake to let your fancy dwell upon me, and you should take back your bail money, and return me to the prison with my friends."

LVI

In the cool of the evening the medicus Arcagathus honoured me with a visit. He was fresh from his ablutions, with face newly shaven and beard trimmed, and an odour of Tyrian perfume upon him. He felt my pulse and looked at my tongue, and then seated himself comfortably and watched me for a minute or two.

" Fili mi," he remarked, " you are fortunate in that you have a sound ancestry, and vitality not depleted by excess; the vis medicatrix naturæ is active in you. You can go home to-morrow, if you desire."

" Thank you," I said, " but I find this place so very restful I may impose myself upon you for a while longer. I have never before realized what a pleasant thing it is to be an invalid."

" Yes," he replied; " it is a discovery that many of your ruling class are making—the ladies especially. I predict for the rest cure a great future. In proportion as the number of one's servants increases, the joys of home-life disappear, and I am certain that many great ladies develop sickness in order to get away from the cares of being well."

" A man in your position must have unusual opportunity to study the eccentricities of human society," I ventured.

" Di immortales! " exclaimed the medicus. " I pledge you my word, Lucius, if ever the seal of professional secrecy were removed from my lips, I could make such revelations—but nobody would believe me; they would call me a mere garbage man, a muck-raker! But truly, it is a strange world, this Rome! "

The old gentleman meditated upon its strangeness for a space. Then he said: " I am glad that my hospitality is appreciated by you; I want to do everything I can to express my gratitude to the house of Faber, to which my progenitors owed much." He became grave, continuing: " Fili mi, let me speak to you as an old friend of your line, who has known you from a child, and has much experience of life to support his words."

" Speak, by all means, O Arcagathus! "

" And let no offence be taken, my son; for what is the use of knowledge if we cannot pass it on to those we love? "

" No offence will be taken, surely."

" This is what I would say to you, having lived many years, and made many blunders that I would preferably not recall. One of the tests of wisdom in a man is that he has learned that all women are alike, and that one will serve as well as another."

I knew then that the old rascal had been listening in the passage outside my cubiculum, which had no door. But I chose to take it lightly. " It is a hard lesson to learn, Arcagathus, for nature has made them to seem so different."

" A delusion, which they themselves foster by many arts. But the way of freedom for a man is to understand

these devices, and realize clearly that if the price of one is high, another can be had within reason."

" Alas, Arcagathus, the very gods themselves, according to the tales we have of them, have not been able to learn that wisdom of yours."

I smiled; but he was determined to have it a serious talk. " Fili mi, I must beg you to stop and realize the position in which I should be placed should you be involved in a damaging entanglement as a consequence of your sojourn with me."

" What is this, Arcagathus? Do you wish to hint that you don't want me in your nosocomium? "

" Father Jupiter forbid that such a thought should cross your mind! What I am trying to hint is that you should spare yourself an unhappiness, and me a great responsibility! "

" As to the latter, old friend, make your mind at ease, for if ever the question should arise, I will make plain to my parents that you had nothing whatever to do with my blunders, and did not even know of them. I will swear that I had told you nothing—and surely it will never occur to my parents that you would keep watch upon a guest."

" Eheu! " exclaimed the old man. He saw that my words were meant to close the subject. " Eheu! It is hard to have to be ignorant when one's profession is to know! "

" Be so good as to step into the passageway," I said, " and make certain that no servant is listening."

He did so, and then came to my bedside, and I said in a low voice: " Remember that in affairs of State matters are not always what they seem upon the surface, and there may be more than one reason for the words and actions of a man."

"Oho! Oho!" exclaimed the medicus, and a light dawned in his face. Such a view of the matter appealed to one of his Greek descent.

"Dictum sapienti satis est," I said, quoting our comic poet, Plautus, whose works are popular among the vulgar, but despised by the literati of Rome. So the mind of my physician was at rest, and he began to chat with me about the spread of medical quackery, and the great number of practitioners who were graduates of no recognized school, and who imposed cruelly upon the credulity of the sick.

LVII

Time passed, and Marcia came in to us, bringing a tray with an evening meal, the sight and odours of which greatly cheered me. Even more cheering was the conversation; for when Marcia, as a respectful servant, sought to leave the room, her employer said: "Stay, child. There is something I want to say to you."

"Yes, master?" she answered humbly.

"Filia mea, I have long been a friend of yours, and still longer of the house of the Gracchi, your father's patrons. There is some advice I will give you, that you should ponder and apply."

"Yes, master."

"I speak out of long experience when I tell you that the test of wisdom in a woman is that she has learned to find herself a wealthy protector, and one who is generous at the same time. For these two virtues are rare separately, and in combination are hardly to be found in the whole wide world."

"Yes, master," said Marcia again; but I saw just the trace of a smile flicker in the corners of her mouth.

" I will tell you further, my dear: it is the duty of a physician, and of his attendants, to do what he and they can to make happy the stay of a guest and the recovery of a patient."

" Yes, master "—this time very solemnly.

" I will say, also, speaking professionally, that it is a most disturbing thing for a feverish patient to be denied that which he ardently craves."

" Master," said the girl, " you speak out of vast learning, and it would ill become a mere nurse to question your words. But it seems that sometimes your instructions are not easily to be reconciled; for I have heard you give other advice which seems to contradict what you tell me now."

" What advice have you heard me give? " The great man's tone revealed a touch of irritability.

" I have heard you say to your pupils that the most valuable lesson a man can learn from life is to dispense cheerfully with those things which he cannot get."

" Yes, to be sure," admitted the medicus, with no good grace. " But——"

" Also I have heard you tell your pupils that there is no pleasure in life so great as that of learning to rule one's unruly spirit."

" Yes, to be sure——"

" Also, master, I have heard you say that the most unfortunate man in the whole world is he that has everything he desires, because for him life prepares the most cruel disillusionments."

By Hercules, but it was insolence! Yet, in my heart, I knew that it was for this very insolence that I admired her; it was this which made her different from other women. Could it be true that, as she herself said, if she were to cease to be Olympian, and descend to earth, I would tire of her, as of Virginia and Hortensia?

LVIII

My Uncle Cornelius came to visit me, bringing his friend, the historian. I was glad to see them both. My uncle always has some news about his researches into ancient Egyptian civilization; and I hear about their customs with pleasure, because they were the most orderly and religious of all the ancient peoples. Their architecture gives one the impression of dignity and solidity—in every way contrasted with the fickle and pleasure-loving qualities of the Greeks. The Egyptians, I say, were the Romans of ancient times.

Of course I give no hint of my prejudice to the Greek historian, Polybius, who has paid us the compliment of writing more than twenty volumes about our affairs, and tells me he expects to increase the number to forty, should the gods spare him long enough. He is a man of tireless industry, for ever conducting investigations; he is now proposing to visit Terrafabri, the ancestral home of our family in the hills beyond Tusculum, expecting there to find records which will clear up obscurities in our early development. This Greek scholar—he comes from Megalopolis, in Arcadia—has had a varied and picturesque career. After our war with Perseus, he was brought to Rome, charged with having been lukewarm to our cause, but he has long since atoned for that fault by the praise he has given to our institutions. He was present at the destruction of Carthage, eight years ago, and hailed this as a great triumph of civilization. In fact it has been Polybius who has interpreted Rome to the world, and even to Romans.

I ask him now what he considers the true basis of our

superiority, and he smiles gently and says: "I take this, my young friend, as indication that you have not read widely in those too many volumes of mine. For I have discussed that problem very fully."

I have to admit that I am a mere business man, not a scholar; but I assure him that now, having been so deeply impressed by his personality, I shall not rest until I have added the complete works of Polybius to the Faber library, and more than that, have added their wisdom to the little which my mind already contains.

"A very charming speech," says the historian. "In payment for it, I will answer your question by translating to you a passage from my history, as well as I can do so from memory. 'A scrupulous fear of the gods is the very thing which keeps the Roman commonwealth together. They use it as a check upon the common people. Seeing that the multitude is fickle, and full of lawless desires, unreasoning anger, and violent passion, the only recourse is to keep them in check by mysterious terrors and occult effects of this sort.'"

"I agree with you," I said, "and I wish that my younger brother might be here to listen to these words of wisdom. For he is one of those who have taken up with the modern fashions of infidelity. He says that it is impossible for an intelligent man to accept the ancient fables, as he calls them."

"One need not believe them all himself," says Polybius; "but one can at least pretend to believe, for the sake of the moral effect upon the populace."

"Yes," I said, "but I have come to the opinion that it is even better to believe; because it is not a good thing for any man to be a hypocrite, nor is it always possible to keep one's beliefs from showing in one's actions."

"There speaks a truly penetrating mind," says the

historian. But unfortunately I see a slight smile upon his lips, so that I cannot be quite sure whether he fully means this compliment. He has the sly and yet demonstrative manners of the Greeks, which always repel me. I am a hundred per cent. Roman.

He discusses the labour strike now under way; a very dangerous thing, he says, this resort of the workers to the Sacred Mount; the idea that the gods are on the side of the rabble is one we must not permit to spread. In fact, Polybius considers this a critical hour in the history of Rome. There is a danger concealed in all Republican institutions, the possibility that the lower orders may seek to use their political power as a means of acquiring property. Right now we see the beginning of such a tendency: the labour guilds, the collegia sodalicia, as we call them, started as innocent social and fraternal affairs, their main purpose being to see that their members received a proper Roman burial. But now they are rapidly taking on a political tinge, and using their power to dictate to political candidates. If that continues, the propertied classes will be compelled to protect themselves, and it will lead to civil war, and ultimately to the overthrow of the republic.

I feel myself fortified in my opinions by the support of this great man. He agrees that it is the duty of our governing class to stand like a rock against every form of paternalism, every effort to carry the State into business, replacing the obligation of the individual to look after himself. If an individual cannot survive by his own strength and cunning, let him go down; that is the stern way of nature, and if any law or human device attempts to repeal it, the end can only be the destruction of the community in which such folly gets a start.

LIX

THIS conversation should have cured me completely of my infatuation for an amazon of the plebs; but alas, when have the passions of man's heart consented to obey his reason? No sooner were my visitors gone than my thoughts returned to Marcia; I pictured her entering the room, and my mind stopped working until she came. Truly, it had got so that I could think about nothing else; the longing for her was worse than fever in my blood. I would tell myself I must give her up, that it was shameless and unmanly weakness to subject myself to her; yet I would go on picturing her as mine, and the state of my emotions would be such that it frightened me. I could not imagine how I was going to get along without this woman.

When she came, I took her hand; and when she sought to withdraw it, I held it fast. "Marcia," I said, "I have not yet got back my full strength, and it may be in your power to deprive me of this hand; but if you had any idea how much harmless pleasure it causes me to hold it, you would surely seem cruel to yourself."

"Lucius," she replied, "if you had any idea how unpleasant it is to a woman to be pursued under such circumstances as this, you would drop my hand quickly."

But this idea had no reality to me. Because the hand ceased to resist, I thought it was the first sign of yielding, and this was rapture to me. I could not but feel that something of this ardour would be communicated to her. It was contrary to nature that such a blazing fire should not spread!

" What," I asked, " can have been the purpose of the gods in creating such a desire in a man if it is all to no purpose? "

" It may be, my friend, that your gods are jealous of you. You know, that has happened many times, in the anecdotes we have of them. You have had your own way too much in this world, and now a trap is set for your feet."

This frightened me, I could not help it; but I tried to take it lightly, and to plead with her sentimentally not to be the agent of such a cruel fate. It rested with her, and her alone; she was my only goddess, and the mistress of my destiny. I do not know that I have ever been so poetical in my life before, and I was preparing still higher flights of fancy when the girl brought me to the ground in a tumble.

" Lucius, all this is childishness, and no part of the duty of a nurse of the sick. If you are well enough for such eloquence, you can go home and be waited upon by your own servants, who will obey you in all things. I, for my part, have to remind you that my friends are lying in jail, at the orders of you and your class. Others of them are starving out on the Sacer Mons, women and children without shelter in the baking midsummer heat of Rome—while your relatives and friends are diverting themselves with the pleasures of Ostia and Bæia. What could I be but a traitor to think of love and dalliance under such circumstances? "

My ardour was chilled, and turned to an icy rage. " Just what do you expect to do? " I demanded.

" I suppose I have no choice. If I leave here you will have me sent back to jail."

" Suppose I do not care to do that? What then? "

" Then I will join the strikers, and do what I can to

help them. No doubt I shall find many who need nursing—more than you do now."

A special insult, but I swallowed it; for I knew that Marcia was as good a quarreller as I. When she was angry her nostrils had a way of quivering; her lips would become set, and her face a mask of scorn. But if I managed to control myself she would be moved to pity, and her tone would become maternal.

"Marcia," I pleaded, "you want to help these unfortunates, but you are only one person, and have no resources. Why not let me help you, and then you could do more."

"Would you, for the sake of a mistress, be willing to aid the enemies of your party? Would you stoop to dishonour for a woman?" She paused, and seeing my shame, went on: "Your class is yours, Lucius, and mine is mine. The gulf between them is too wide for our hands to reach across."

"But what do you mean by your class?" I pleaded. "You were not born among these people. Was your father an artisan?"

"My father was a man of moderate substance, but he lost it during the great war, and ended his life in the old Roman fashion."

"But does that mean that you have to stay low in the social scale? Many a family has been struck down and has risen again. You are a woman of charm, and a husband could be found for you——"

She rose from the chair. "Lucius, your plans are well thought out. You are a man of business, and have decided what you will do with me after you are tired of me."

"Marcia," I protested, "you put words into my mouth that have not been in my thoughts."

She answered coldly: "I have had opportunities to watch the patrician class, and I know your ways. Forget this dream of an untamed mistress, and put your thoughts on the problem of whether you mean to send me back to jail."

LX

Word had spread quickly among my friends that I could now see visitors, and several came, and started to assure me that I was not disgraced by the upset in the circus. I would redeem myself next time, they agreed. But I told them I had made up my mind to bow to my parents' wishes; the Roman populace had seen me for the last time in the rôle of auriga. I should have to think of some other way to keep the Cometes chariots in the public eye: so I remarked with a smile.

My capable young executive, Claudius Hiemes—his name had been Winters in America—had had his mind on this problem. He came now, carrying a brief-case full of figures as to the finances of the games. He told me the gossip of our business: what our rivals were doing and planning, and the rumours concerning the new season's models. One of the aurigæ had died, as a result of injuries; another had spent his winnings on a wine-party, and got stabbed by one of his guests. Two of our factory-hands had been urging a demand for higher wages, and they were believed to be agents of Eunus.

But one thing weighed especially upon the mind of young Claudius; the disgusting procedure which our closest rivals, the Ferox concern, had undertaken. They had won the greatest number of races, and had mounted the golden palms upon a gold-inlaid Ferox currus, and hitched four magnificent white steeds in front of it, and

sent it parading around the Forum, and past the temples where the crowds of worshippers were assembled. It was a sort of self-contrived triumph, an unprecedented piece of effrontery. My sales head thought there ought to be some way to have it declared blasphemy, or treason at the least; but as the lawyers thought this not possible, he now proposed to go our rivals one better. It appeared that we, in the course of the years, had made a far better record than the Ferox; so why should we not mount all the golden palms which we had won, and parade a whole string of Cometes curri about the streets of Rome?

The fellow had cudgelled out an idea that was really a marvel. One branch of my father's business is the bringing of vast numbers of animals for the gladiatorial contests; we have relations with concerns in every corner of the world for the shipping to us of all sorts of fierce and beautiful creatures: Numidian lions and Phrygian panthers, Hyrcinian bears and Æthiopian zebras, aurochs from Germania and elephants from India—all these come, and how easy to get some which had been tamed, and could be yoked to our chariots, and sent in procession through our streets, garlanded and adorned, with their native keepers at their sides.

The fancy of my young salesman is turned loose, and he proposes what he calls a " circus parade," not merely all over Rome, but to the outlying towns, and through the watering-places, Ostia, Bæia, Antium, all the way to Neapolis; so that the wealthy, who are buyers of pleasure and racing chariots, will be set to talking about the Cometes! What a scheme to introduce our models for the year 617, which, according to the current practice, are to be offered to the public in the early fall!

I am sorry to dash the youngster's enthusiasm, but I have to remind him that while the Cometes is a new con-

cern, the Faber family is an old one, and I have to give some thought to its rights. Parades and processions are for the purpose of honouring the gods, and triumphs are for the glorifying of Roman arms. If our rivals choose to commit acts of desecration in order to promote their sales, we cannot stop them, but we can surely stand upon our dignity, and trust that not all the public will be led astray by circus methods.

In vain poor Claudius pleads for his pet idea. Conservatism is all right, he says, but this is a new era, and its motto is "speed." How can you expect to sell things to the crowd unless you let them know what you have? It pays to advertise; look, for example, at the way Aulus Valentinus is boosting the gladiatorial show he is giving next week! Signs all over the city, and billboards on the highways; the names of the gladiators, and their records and origins, and the number of beasts—and above everything the name of C. Aulus Valentinus, in letters several times as big as the rest!

I answer yes, I have noted this vulgarity; it is in line with everything this self-made plutocrat has done. He tries to get himself invited to our banquets, in order that he may have the fact inscribed on the mausoleum in which he plans to have himself buried. But the Fabers are advertised by the deeds of their ancestors, and the Cometes currus are advertised on every highway by their own performance, as well as by the words of satisfied customers. They will never be advertised by processions of zebras and giraffes while Lucius Faber is the owner of the plant.

LXI

I HEAR more about this Aulus Valentinus when good old Rufus Hanno pays me a call. He comes with diffidence, not being used to such a grand place; but I hasten to assure him that every veteran of the great war will always be welcome to see me, though I may be in the presence of a consul. So then Rufus grins like his good-natured, red-headed self, and proceeds to tell me all the news; the progress of the strike, which has lasted two weeks now, and is making havoc in the business affairs of Rome. The authorities have not dared to invade the Sacred Mount, but they arrest the leaders whenever they catch them elsewhere, and are slowly starving the rebels out. "We shall lick them good and plenty!" says Rufus.

Also, he tells me the news of the Forum, which my family has been engaged in concealing from me. Have I seen yesterday's *Acta Diurnorum*? When I say no, he wonders if he should tell me; and of course I make him do so.

My name is in the paper, on the front page! That homo sceleratus, Bobbius Julius, rose up in the Curia, and in his rôle of prætor demanded that I should be prosecuted for the killing of Agri, head of the Lumbermen's Guild. Not, said Julius, that he intended to support the actions of this man in seeking to use the power of the guilds for political purposes, and to cripple the industry of the city. But such offences were to be dealt with by the duly constituted authorities, and not by irresponsible mobs. What would become of law and order in Rome if a group of veterans, relying upon their prestige as legionaries, could take the law in their own hands, and deport from the city,

and kill, even by accident, any person of whose ideas they happened to disapprove?

So there was a full account of the procedure in the *Acta Diurnorum*, which is our daily newspaper of Rome; and the mob of striking artisans and idlers were clamouring for the punishment of Lucius Faber! The Senate had taken no action as yet, said Rufus; I knew, of course, that my parents would be working with all the political influence they possessed to thwart this plot against me. Rufus wanted to bring several of his buddies to keep watch over my sleeping chamber in this nosocomium, but I laughed at this, telling him that Rome had not yet descended to the level of Greece, in carrying on its political disputes by assassination.

Rufus knew all the gossip of the underworld, and told me that this action of Julius was inspired by Valentinus, who had put up the campaign funds to elect him, and whose political tool he was. Valentinus was seeking revenge upon my family for having opposed his business plans. It seems that this capitalist, among his many enterprises, is head of a company which seeks to dam and use the waters of the river Anio for irrigation purposes; and father and grandfather have denounced him, because the project will render useless the lands of all the farmers in that valley, and add these rustici to the hundreds of thousands who come flocking to Rome, clamouring for nourishment at the public crib. It is really a shocking thing how these franchises are put through by shameless bribery and corruption. The great corporations—societates, they are called—have their agents in the Forum, working in their interest, and provided with limitless funds; and what chance do those stand who serve the public welfare with empty hands?

Rufus tells me the news about our friends. Picus, the pugil, has won a huge purse, thirty thousand sesterces, in

a boxing bout two days ago, a spectacle conducted in honour of the opening of the new temple to Hercules; Rufus wagered five hundred sesterces upon his friend and buddy, and oh, it was a grand fight—there has been no wielder of the cæstus in our time who can equal Picus! The crowd would surely mob anybody who tried to punish him for the deporting of labour conspirators!

Then Rufus tells about another of our associates, Vilcinus, the bootlegger—a rarely comical tale. You see, a man cannot afford to break too many kinds of laws, even in Rome, and Vilcinus had been anxious lest the authorities might take the killing of Agri as a pretext for punishment. Now, however, he tells Rufus that there is no longer any need to worry, since he has added to his list of customers that very ædile before whom the case would be tried, if ever it comes to a trial!

Vilcinus, I must explain, earns his living in a peculiar way. We have in Rome strict sumptuary laws, intended to put a stop to the extravagances of our newly rich. It is forbidden to import certain kinds of costly foreign perfumes which are demanded by our wealthy courtesans; it is forbidden to have silver or gold plate of massiveness beyond a specified amount; it is forbidden to own or to consume or to purchase a long list of foreign foods and wines. And, of course, no sooner are these things forbidden than they immediately become necessary to every truly fashionable banquet. The tricliniaria of our fashionable folk resound with denunciations of " prohibition," and it becomes a major political issue.

Our well-to-do classes can no longer digest coarse Roman food; they must have peacocks from Samos, and grouse from Phrygia, and cranes from Melos, and kids from Ambracia, and tunny-fishes from Chalcedon, and murænæ from the Straits of Gades, and aselli from Pessinus, and

oysters and scallops from Tarentum, and sturgeons from Rhodes, and scarus fishes from Cicilia, and nuts from Thaos, and dates from Egypt, and acorns from Hispania. The providing of all these delicacies has become a thriving industry, and many of those who carry it on have joined the millionaire class.

Picture to yourself some newly-rich "knight"—he is called that, though never in his life has he mounted a horse—being carried in his litter to the Forum, to pass new laws for the enforcement of prohibition; when up sidles our sly friend, Vilcinus, and whispers: "Most honoured sir, I have in my possession at this moment the most extraordinary service of gold plate which was once upon the table of the great Artaxerxes himself." Or perhaps it is: "Most noble leader of the equites, I have this morning received from a boat which rowed up the river Tiber last night, three dozen amphoræ of the most rare sweet wine from Tauromenium." Whereupon the noble gentleman remembers that he has received that day ten million sesterces from his shares in the tax-collecting company of Cappadocia, and that he wants to do something special to introduce to his friends a new dancing girl from Lesbos; therefore he writes the bootlegger a cheque upon his banker, and wonders why the crime wave grows.

LXII

I AM pleading with Marcia; she does not give me a chance. When I seek to understand her ideas and way of life, she spurns me. Will she not do me the honour to explain those matters which divide us?

"Very well," she says, "we will talk politics. But I

know it is futile, for you cannot listen without losing your temper."

Thus challenged, I sit in silence, biting my tongue while she presents the programme of the demagogues and agitators. She takes me in fancy to visit the homes of the plebs, in those terrible slum districts which have sprung up in Rome—in the valleys between the hills, and all over the Aventine hill; the rows of tenements, called insulæ, four and five stories high, thrown together in a hurry by builders seeking profits, and frequently burning down, or falling of their own weight. In these filthy warrens swarm the poor, whole families jammed into a single room, often with no light or air whatever. In such places I would not keep my chariot horses, says Marcia; yet I blame the poor, because they are dirty and ignorant, lacking in my own urbanity and charm.

So speaks the "amphora agitator"—the name my father gives them, because they are wont to stand upon an inverted wine-jar when they wish to harangue the mobs. I ask why these people have come to Rome, and Marcia is provided with an answer—because they have been driven off the land. Cheap wheat pours in from Egypt and Africa, and a single bad harvest puts the Roman farmer in the clutches of the moneylenders; he loses his land, and comes to the city seeking work. Don't I know that vast tracts of the public lands have been seized, or fraudulently purchased by the great societates? Don't I know that the Italian peninsula is being turned from a country of small farms to a collection of great estates, and grazing lands owned and exploited by corporations? Don't I know how the latifundia, the estates of the rich, are expelling thousands of independent farmers. every year?

I have to admit that I know all these things, for I have

heard my Uncle Silvester argue about them; I know that my father owns such an estate, and counts the year lost unless he has added a hundred jugera to it.

The people have lost their heritage, and what are they to do? demands Marcia. I admit that I do not know; so she, out of her twenty-two or three years of wisdom, proceeds to inform me. The people must go into politics, and use their collective power to control the Government, and to reverse, in the interest of the democracy, those economic forces which have made them proletarians. Attempting this move, they find confronting them the political prestige of the optimates, the so-called " better classes "; they face the money-power, the whole massed interest of Roman capitalism. Their leaders are brought away from them——

" Exactly so, Marcia," I break in. " It is that corruption which makes the plebs so dangerous! "

" But who is the corrupter, Lucius Faber, he who takes the bribe, or he who gives it? He who acts out of need, or he who acts out of greed? "

" Even so, what can you do about it? "

" We can seek honest leaders of the poeple; we can teach the workers so that they will not be so easily led astray. That is assuredly the only chance to save the Republic."

" Listen, Marcia," I pleaded; " in this very room, only two days ago, I talked with one of the greatest scholars and wisest men of our time, the Greek historian, Polybius. We discussed these very questions, and his opinion is exactly the opposite of yours. He declares that the existence of the Roman Republic depends upon the putting down of these popular groups which seek to use their votes to plunder the rich. How can you, a mere girl, set up your judgment against that of the most learned man in our city? "

" The answer is obvious, Lucius. This Polybius is himself a man of wealth, and an associate of such. He comes to Rome, and is taken up and patronized by the aristocracy, and naturally when he speaks about our politics and industry, he is careful to express those opinions which will be agreeable to his hosts."

" So it comes to this," I said. " If a man's opinion agrees with yours, you say it is wisdom; but if he differs, you say it is his wealth, or else his greed, which is speaking! "

I have made an effort to control my feelings; but this is too much for me, to hear a mere woman, and a serving-woman at that, setting at nought the carefully considered opinion of the world-famous historian. There creeps into my voice a tone of scorn; and, as I have said before, Marcia is as capable as myself at this.

" I told you in advance that our discussion would be futile. I show you facts, and you answer by quoting authority. I can only say that you manufacture these authorities for your own purpose, and to us of the working-class they are merely so many bars in our jail-doors."

LXIII

I HAVE sent a message to my father saying that I have learned about the publication in the *Acta Diurnorum*, and want to know if there is anything I can do. He comes to visit me, after a busy day, in which he and my grandfather have been negotiating with both friends and enemies, pulling political strings. He tells me that he expects to have the matter settled in a day or two, and

that meanwhile I am to stay quiet, because it is far better for the public to think that I am ill as a result of the accident in the races.

I assure him that I am well enough to be told what is going on, but I find that he does not wish to tell me, and I realize that both he and Quintus have felt something strange about me since I was hurt. They don't know what it is, and have come to the natural conclusion that my mind has been affected by the shock and the fever. They are going ahead to settle my troubles for me, without asking my opinion, or burdening my mind with theirs.

So here I am left, with nothing to do but to fall deeper under the spell of Marcia Penna! It is really a startling thing; I have never dreamed of such emotions. They seize me like a hand at my throat; they cause my heart to strike heavy blows inside my chest. I fall into the most abject moods of despair: I want to write poetry, I want to shed tears, and abase myself before my idol. I do so; and when I am politely spurned, I fly into a rage—that I, the heir of the Fabers, should experience such indignities from a plebeian woman. But for the most part I keep these rages to myself, and when Marcia is in the room I follow her about with the eyes of a sheep, I grovel before her like a well-thrashed dog, and pick up crumbs of kindness like a starving beggar.

This cannot go on, I tell myself; yet it does go on, and I cannot figure how to stop it. I pace the floor, like a man in jail. I have got Marcia out of jail, and myself in, and I am in a rage with the fates which have played such a trick! But what can I do? The girl is impervious to my threats, because she does not care whether I send her to jail or not; at least, she says she does not care, and really seems to mean it; this apparently is what she calls " moral force."

A mad project is taking form in my mind: I will ask her to marry me! I will humble my patrician pride, and undertake the long campaign which will be necessary to persuade my parents to permit such a thing. I will have Marcia dressed like a lady, and taken to my home, and introduced to my noble mother, and to my father, who, while proud and irritable of temper, is devoted to his son, and has never heard an undutiful word from me. I will have it set forth to them that Marcia's labours in the nosocomium were a kind of religious novitiate; that she was not earning a living, but acquiring skill in the arts of Æsculapius. Or perhaps I can have it that she came in order to take care of me; turning it into one of those idyllic love stories such as we have from the Greeks.

Yes, there are ways I might fix it up; but one thing is indispensable, the co-operation of Marcia. Will I get that? I tell myself it would be inconceivable for a woman to refuse to become a lady of the Faber line. Yet suppose that Marcia should cling to her plebs. Suppose she should insist upon her right, even after marriage, to hold her own political opinions, and visit strikers on the Sacer Mons, and aid and abet them in their war on society? That would be a first-class scandal in Rome!

Yet, such is my infatuation, I debate even that in my mind. I recall that there are ladies who profess sympathy for the lower orders. Quintus knows some such, and has told me about them. In his fashionable crowd it is permitted to hold any sort of extravagant opinion; it is the elegant thing to jeer at our civilization, and to glorify every sort of critic and seditionist. You will even hear people say that it would have made no difference if Carthage had won the war!

Hitherto, such women have been to my thoughts the symbol of mental depravity. I recall what I have heard

about Cornelia, wife of the elder Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus, recently tribune of the people. Because of this woman's outspoken defence of the rabble, my father, who has a talent for incisive phrases, dubbed her a " parlour plebeian." Now it appears that she has been the patron of Marcia Penna, and has educated her. And here am I, contemplating the idea of asking my father to welcome this virago contumacissima as his daughter-in-law, and invite her into our home, to voice her rejection of everything he holds sacred in the world!

I ask Marcia about Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi; and on this subject she is willing to talk freely. Readers of history will recall that Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus, the elder, earned his laurels by service in the wars in Hispania, and left behind him two sons, the elder bearing his name, and the younger known as Caius. Marcia, it appears, lived with this family for several years, and sings the praises of the wonderful mother—her devotion to the two boys, her stern teaching of justice, her love for the masses of the people. These fanatics make a sort of religion of affection for the ragged and filthy rabble. The first step in the initiation must be that you close your senses, and neither see them, nor hear them, nor smell them as they really are, but conceive them in some glorified state, as they will be when the radical cause has prevailed, and we all dwell happily together in an Olympian paradise, sipping nectar and honey—the hard and sweaty work being done for us, presumably, by magic.

Marcia tells me how she, as a child, first knew Cornelia, the " parlour plebeian," on the country estate of

the family, where Marcia's father was steward. When the father died, Marcia was taken into the home, and taught all the family arts, and likewise, it seems, the family politics. She learned to know various conspirators against public order—at least, so I have hitherto considered them, but I have to change now, under my new tutor, and learn that they are the future saviours of the Republic. I listen, and remember the names; for in the back of my mind is a remainder of common sense, telling me that some day I shall escape this thraldom to a chiton, or female garment, and then all this information will be useful to me.

The elder of the two Gracchi sons served with Scipio Africanus in the taking of Carthage; he was only fifteen at the time, and was the first to mount the city wall; I have heard Polybius, who was also there, refer to his gallant conduct. I listened with no great pleasure; for during this fighting I was unable to get overseas, but was kept in camp at Rhegium, drilling one cohort after another, a task without interest and without glory. Now Tiberius Sempronius is serving as a quæstor in Hispania, following in his father's footsteps, and expecting to become tribune before many years. The younger son is now twenty, a student here in Rome, imbibing his mother's teachings, and expecting to emulate both father and brother. These are the men who are to rule us; and I bite my tongue to keep Marcia from perceiving my jealousy and anger.

"What do they expect to do?" I ask; and she tells me that the elder brother has a project for a law, to take back all the public lands which have been unlawfully seized, whether by individuals or by corporations. I point out to her that these lands have many of them been sold several times over, and are now in the

possession of quite innocent persons. But she insists that makes no matter; they must be taken back, because the dogmas of the Gracchi require that the Italian peninsula shall be brought back to the system of small farming. It is really nothing but a vicious plan to expropriate the rich; these politicians are not so much interested in the pleasure they will give to the plebs as in the pain they will give to the plutocracy. The lands are to be assigned to settlers, and it will be forbidden that anyone shall own more than five hundred jugera, less than half a square mile!

"But, Marcia!" I exclaim. "Can you seriously believe that such a law will ever get by the Senate?"

"It must get by," she insists; "or else——"

"Else what?"

"Else the Senate will be overthrown."

"Oh! So that is the programme! You intend to destroy our Government!"

"We intend to save the Republic, Lucius."

"Is that the programme the Gracchi advocate among themselves?"

"I am not authorized to speak for them," she says, realizing, no doubt, that she has gone too far. "I am telling you what will happen if this demand of justice is not granted."

"Let me tell you what will happen, Marcia! If any men, or set of men, no matter how illustrious, dare to raise their impious hands against the palladium of our safety, if they dare to strike at the greatest government in the history of mankind, at a constitution which is the most wonderful instrument that ever emanated from the brain of man—a system of checks and balances, which affords the greatest possible amount of liberty under law——"

"Hold on, Lucius, you are not on the Rostra now. What is it that will happen to them?"

"They will be stood against the wall and shot at sunrise by Scythian archers! They will be nailed to the cross! They will be thrown to the lions in the arena! They——"

"That's enough!" she laughed. "When the Scythian archers and Roman crucifiers get through with them, presumably they won't mind the lions. In short, Lucius, you are a rich man, and you mean to hold on to your money, and to kill anyone who tries to take it from you. So what is the use of you and me talking politics?"

LXV

I SIT on the side of my bed, with my head in my hands, sinking through bottomless abysses of despair. Of all the tricks that fate could play upon a man, to send him a mistress with whom it is necessary to argue problems of economics and finance, and to settle the destinies of Roma æterna, as preliminary to a meeting of hearts! What an overturning of everything orderly and decent, when women concern themselves with things which they cannot understand!

Marcia comes in, bringing me a meal for which I have neither eyes nor stomach, not even nose; and seeing my attitude, she sets the tray upon the table, and says: "Listen to me, Lucius Faber, this thing is quite too foolish to go on. You are perfectly well now—or else you are keeping yourself sick, crying like a spoiled child for something you cannot have. I think you should go home; or at least you should tell me if you wish me to go back to jail."

My answer is to spring up suddenly and clasp her in my arms. " Marcia, I cannot stand this! I cannot give you up, either to jailers or to the Gracchi! "

She stands like a block of wood, with her head drawn back from me. " Lucius, this is most unseemly. I do not want to struggle with you——"

I do not insist that she shall struggle; I prefer her to stay quiet, so that I can persuade her to love me. I hold her tighter—there is still pain in my shoulder, but I do not feel it. " I must have you! " I whisper, over and over. I go on, pouring out my feelings in a torrent.

But in vain. " Lucius, please let me go! This will get you nowhere."

I do not know that I have ever been so eloquent before. I adjure her, by all the gods in which she does not believe. I tell the story of my suffering. I humble myself, I promise her anything she wants, any freedom, any rights. She may think what she will, say what she will—and never again will I open my lips on the hateful subject of politics, never will I affront her love for the great unwashed. I plead my loneliness, my grief, my concern for her. I must have succeeded in saying something touching, for I saw tears come into her eyes, and I thought: " At last! She loves me! " My head began to reel.

But still in vain. " Lucius, I can never love you. I have told you a hundred times. Please let me go. I do not want to strike you, to call out and disgrace you in this place, but I will have to do it unless you release me."

She makes an effort more violent than ever, and now my shoulder really hurts, and I have to give up the struggle. I stand with my head bowed; and she steps back towards the doorway.

" My friend," she says, " this is the end. I cannot

go any further. I am returning to my people. You have not said whether you wish me sent to jail, and I am tired of asking the question. If your police want me, they will find me at the Sacer Mons with the strikers. I am sorry for you, and wish you did not have to suffer; but you and your class make millions to suffer for your pleasure, and if the gods pour out for you your own medicine, you must recognize it as justice. Good-bye."

She goes; and no doubt tells the medicus what has happened, for presently he comes into the room, greatly concerned, and leads me to the bed, and tries to comfort me. I am ashamed for a man to see me in such a plight, but he assures me that it is nothing, it is a tribute which sooner or later in life every man pays to that enchanting but dangerous divinity, Aphrodite of the Greeks, our Venus Victrix. He delivers a discourse upon her terrors; Venus Callipyge, Venus Genetrix, Venus Anadyomene, born of the sea! He quotes the testimony of the poets as to the cruelty of her disposition and the misery in which she holds her subjects. He ends with the sallies of our Plautus, who, a couple of generations ago, was turning a grinding-mill for a baker here in Rome, and no doubt experiencing the anguish of soul which he put into his verses. Love makes the manners of men both foolish and morose—a pun not easy to translate: "mores hominum moros et morosos." And then another: "amor amara dat tibi satis"—love gives you bitters enough. Love shuns the Forum, and drives your relatives from you —which is surely apposite enough to my case! "Apage sis amor!—love, get thee gone—keep your affairs to yourself! I am determined to apply my mind to my own advancement in life."

An excellent discourse, all the more effective because in a vein of friendly raillery. The worthy Arcagathus

bids me contemplate this thing as I will see it a year from now, when it will serve for jesting at a banquet of my friends. When he sees that I cannot achieve this aloofness, he offers me a sleeping draught to dull my anguish. When I reject this, he invites me to go with him for a stroll in the markets where women's flesh is sold, and where one finds any and every sort imaginable—long or short, lean or fat, dark or fair, petite or statuesque—and he will guarantee me, for a hundred or two of sesterces, one whom I cannot tell from Marcia in the dark; and surely it would be beneath the dignity of a Roman aristocrat to submit himself to the sway of Aphrodite by daylight! Is that not indicated by her title, Melainis, the dark one?

LXVI

A VISITOR comes to distract my tormented mind: no less a person than Clarentus Calvus, manufacturer of amphoræ, and head of that organization of business men who are putting up the money to defeat the attempt at labour revolution. No better influence could have been thought of for me; he brings me back to the world with a sharp shock, making me realize with what madness I have been dallying. The Roman state is in danger, and this bald-headed, rosy-faced gentleman is saving it, and bubbling over with news as to his achievements. What a misfortune that I should be incapacitated at such a stirring moment!

I look as forlorn and helpless as I can, and Calvus goes on to tell me how the secret emissaries of Eunus are creeping into the city by night, and circulating among the artisans, inciting them to what they call a "general strike." The ædile has issued an edictum, forbidding

any meetings of the labour guilds during the present emergency; the party of the plebs is in an uproar over this, denying the right of any ædile to issue such an order. They are denouncing what they call "government by injunction." The class struggle is coming rapidly to a head, and if it does not eventuate in civil war, my friend Calvus will lose his standing as a prophet. His large eyes bulge as he tells me of the dangers which surround us.

He thanks me for the service rendered by the veterani of the Legion. To be sure, some of the outside agitators came back, but the police were put upon their mettle, and have been far more active ever since. The killing of Agri will in the end be recognized as an aid to law and order; Calvus wishes to assure me of what he has already said to my elders, that his organization will back me to the limit in any trouble that may result. I tell him I do not know what my father and grandfather have been doing, but I feel sure they have no serious concern.

My visitor then reveals the true purpose of his coming: he wants to know what success I have had in getting information from the woman whom I caused to be released on bail. I tell him that, to my great humiliation, I must admit to failure so far. Calvus replies that he feared it would be so; these seditionists have a close organization, and stand by one another to the death. I tell him I still have some hope of success. Of course I do not mention that Marcia has left the nosocomium, because I do not want the police put on to her trail.

My friend reveals that they already have considerable information about this woman, obtained through the secret agent, Albus, whom I used to know as Weiss. Marcia Penna is a protégée of the Sempronii Gracchi, and a sample of the plagues that Cornelia, daughter of the

Scipiones, is turning loose upon Rome. Calvus has heard my father's witticism about Cornelia, the "parlour plebeian," and has adopted it for his own. He tells me that Marcia has a brother, Olivus Pennus, who was arrested in the disturbances at the Forum, but obtained his release upon the pretext that he was there as a reporter, a "scriptor diurnorum," as we call it. Calvus tells me what sort of "scriptor" this young jackanapes really is—an agent of Eunus, sending bulletins as to the progress of the labour movement in Rome. The manufacturer of amphoræ assures me that through Albus and other spies they expect to intercept some of these messages, and to punish the youth for sedition.

I lie upon my bed, feverish and racked with pain, listening to this sensible talk of a far-sighted man of affairs, and I am gripped by a spasm of shame for the madness to which I have yielded. I tell myself that I am a Faber once more, and will banish for ever from my mind this nightmare of Aphrodite Melainis, the dark one. I thank my friend for his visit, and see him go; and then comes a nurse with my supper, a strange woman, not Marcia Penna—and my heart is twisted with grief, and the tears come into my eyes!

LXVII

I AM still ill, but can no longer bear this place, nor the cynicisms of the talkative medicus. I want to go home; and next morning comes my father, bringing the opportune news that he has made a deal with the authorities, whereby the matter of the killing of Agri is to be dropped.

Now that it is over, he does not mind letting me know

the facts: a somewhat shady episode in Roman history, concerning which I suppose it might be better to keep silent. My father has paid the sum of twenty thousand sesterces to the prætor, Bobbius Julius; but the important part of the deal is that he and grandfather have consented to make no further opposition to the project of Aulus Valentinus, to dam the upper waters of the Anio river. A scoundrelly project, says my revered progenitor, but after all, there is a limit to the sacrifices any one family can be expected to make in the general interest. We have rendered a service to the State in killing Agri and forcing the police to greater activity; perhaps in the scales of history that will weigh more heavily than the preservation of the public right to a water supply.

In my mind is the question, what is to become of those hundreds of farmers whose land will be rendered worthless by this new dam? I know the answer, having heard it in the speeches of my grandfather: these men and their families will be added to the mob which pours into Rome expecting to be fed at the public crib. But I keep this concern to myself, for my father is pleased with what he has done, and I, as a dutiful son, must thank him.

I tell him of my wish to return home. No, I do not want to go to the shore, but to be near my business. He sends a litter for me, and I bid farewell to my medicus, and am carried to our palace on the Palatine hill, an especially lovely spot, looking to the south-west, down the river valley.

Our home does not seem very much from the street; like all Roman houses, the display is within, while outside you see merely a blank wall of stone and plaster, with a few windows having iron bars, and a door with a porter always on guard. Since the war there has been such a crime wave in Rome that the authorities scarcely

know what steps to take; the thieves and hold-up men form themselves into gangs, with a regular organization, which it appears impossible to break up, because of the services they render to various corrupt and law-breaking interests. It has got so now that citizens do not travel through the streets at night, except in company, and with a group of well-armed servants.

When you enter the doorway of the Faber house you see a lovely apartment, the atrium, finished in the wood of the African citron tree; there are the masks of our ancestors, and some of the finest Greek statuary and wall paintings—for you are no longer considered to be "cultured" unless you have Greek art in your home. In the centre is the impluvium, a basin into which the rains fall through the hole in the roof which ventilates the apartment and carries off the smoke of our hearth-fire. On the one side of the atrium are the library, the drawing-room, and to the rear, the dining-room, pantry, and kitchen. On the other side are gymnasium, tennis-court, a plunge bath, and massage rooms. Through the rear doors you have a lovely view of peristyles and gardens, with a covered walk and a vine-valley. On one side is a hedge of myrtle, and beyond it the quarters for the many servants. All the sleeping rooms, and the apartments of the ladies, are in the upper story, with balconies, and vines which supply both fruit and shade.

Here I am at home, and may command what I will. My father complains of the heat, and wishes to go to the shore to join my mother and sisters. I insist that I am quite all right, and somewhat dubiously he and grandfather take their departure; our yacht will take them down the river, and if the weather is favourable, they will sail or be rowed directly to our shore place. I have important matters to attend to, I assure them; but after they are

gone I sit in my room, perfectly numb, not knowing what to do with myself. The one thing I can think about is how to see Marcia again, and what can be happening to her, and if she is arrested again, what pretext can I devise for freeing her? How long can I manage to keep the secret of this infatuation from becoming known to Calvus and the rest of my partisans?

One thing I might do to still my longing; I might take the advice of the cynical medicus, and pay a call upon Virginia. Gladly she would welcome me, and make me feel at home! I have sent her word from the nosocomium that I am doing well, and am not to be worried about; but that is as far as I can go. Try as I will to learn the lesson of wisdom, that all women are alike, it remains a fact that one woman seems different to my tormented imagination, and it is this woman I want. I form hare-brained projects to intervene in this cruel class war, and bring about some kind of settlement, so as to close the gap between my beloved and myself.

LXVIII

In the ordinary course of events I should have been spending these turbulent days in the Forum, taking part in the debates over the strike. It is the place for those who contemplate a political career; where you learn the insides of public affairs, and impress your personality upon others. But now it appears that I have no interest in politics at all. I find it a blind and rather hateful struggle, of men who do not really know very much about the forces they are attempting to direct. My pessimism is increased by the reading of a volume of Polybius, which my Uncle

Cornelius has sent over to me. History has come to seem an ugly dream!

There is only one thing I really want, which is to have a glimpse of the Sacred Mount where the labour people are encamped. A night's rest has diminished my fever, and I think that with care I can ride, so I order my favourite Numidian pony, and three servants to escort me, and in the coolness of early morning I ride forth. Because the pony has been a long time in the stable, and is full of energy, I place a man on each side of him with a check-rein; in this way I can be sure of not hurting my shoulder.

Our road takes us through the worst of the slum districts, about which I have been arguing with Marcia. The street is narrow, and without pavement; tall buildings—four stories high—rise on each side, making as it were a gorge of stone. The windows are small, and even at this early hour crowded with bedding put out to dry, and with the bodies of humans seeking air. Trash and slops are thrown out, and the streets are full of litter, in which starved curs are nosing. Sore-eyed babies swarm under the horses' hoofs, and the way is blocked with pedlars of stinking fish and herbs and whatnot.

I have travelled through such streets a thousand times, and never given thought to them; but now I think of Marcia's notion, that these creatures are to be humanized, and to become our equals; or rather, so runs the doctrine, they are to become our equals first, and the humanizing is to come later. I study them now, trying to comprehend this doctrine—with no great success, I must admit. Such human maggots are spawned by the million all over the earth, and the gods who permit the process may possibly know why, but I don't, and have no great desire to. I might feel sorry for such wretches; but according to my way of thinking, we who have been favoured by fate have

enough to do in preserving our own better qualities; one of our duties is not to become sentimental, but to keep that judgment and discipline which constitute greatness of soul.

No, if I am sorry for anyone, let it be for myself, upon whom the fates have played a scurvy trick! I am going to the Sacer Mons because Marcia is there, and I want to be near her; but at the same time I despise myself for doing a crazy thing which would cause all my friends to lose respect for me. I pray to the gods for release from this enslavement, and try to figure out in what form this release can come.

There is no bridge across the Tiber in these days; we are ferried upon a sort of heavy raft, by boatmen with long sweeps, who chant a song to Charon for safe passage. We pay them a price fixed by law for each man and horse; but we are permitted to pay for a drink of wine extra, and this they receive with bows and wishes for our safe return—and another fee! We ride upon a highway paved with slabs of peperino, a volcanic rock; a much travelled road, because a small city has moved out to this hill, and somehow, it appears, the settlers have a few coppers to buy bread and leeks.

We ride slowly, and it takes us nearly an hour to reach the spot; then what do I see as a reward for this tedious journey? Many thousands of miserable, ill-clad wretches, men, women and children, exposed to the fierce mid-summer sun, for the most part without any shelter—though a few of them have bedding stretched upon upright sticks for shade, which causes the place to be referred to as a " tent colony."

These are the skilled artisans of our city, the weavers of cloth and makers of pottery. They are hoping now for the shipwrights to join them, and perhaps the

carpenters and builders of houses. What good it will do to add to the mass of pullulating misery on this barren spot—this is beyond me. But then the whole matter is beyond me: what they expect to accomplish, and indeed, what object they have in living, or how they manage to endure from day to day. But here they are, and it must be that they find excess of pleasure over pain, or they would not be here. One of the Greek philosophers, whose name I cannot recall, asserts that as a self-proven proposition about every living creature.

But what have I to do with it, and why am I here? Because I know that Marcia is among these people, presumably nursing some of their many sick; and I am driven by my madness to be as near to her as possible. But I dare not go too near, because, as I have to remind myself, I am a marked man among these revolutionaries. They regard me as a murderer, and among them are doubtless fanatics who would be eager to pay me in my own coin. In my present condition I would put up a poor defence. So I do no more than ride around this hill.

Half-way I encounter a young man striding into the place. I have seen that face before; I see him start, and stare at me, and am sure that he knows me. Then I remember; it is young Olivus Pennus, the alleged "scriptor diurnorum," pursuing his vocation, no doubt. He will think that I am pursuing mine, spying out the ground, perhaps planning an attack upon the tent colony. He will report my presence at once, so I am in danger. I give orders to my servants, and we turn our faces towards Rome again, not failing to watch out for pursuers. But no one troubles us, and we board the ferry again, and I reach my home, and lay myself upon my bed, burning with fever, and with shame, because of the folly I have committed —or is it because I have failed to see Marcia?

LXIX

ANOTHER restless night, and I decide that I cannot stay in this town house alone. I will go to the shore, where my family can divert me, and help me to realize the impropriety of my desires. So I order another cavalcade for the next morning; we will start at dawn, and ride fast—I am able to control my own horse, I believe, and we will reach Thalassa before the heat of the day.

I will let my business take care of itself; I do not care for it any more—I have come to agree with the old-fashioned ideas of my grandfather, that manufacturing and selling anything, even an object of play for the rich, is beneath the dignity of an heir of the senatorial order. I will go to a place which is beautiful and cool, and enjoy those good things which the gods have allowed me, for reasons which they in their wisdom must know. I will return to the ways of my family, and seek the company of my pure and gentle-souled betrothed; or perhaps follow the example of my brother, and play with some of the many free ladies of our wealthy classes—I am not sure just what I want to do, but I know that I want to get away from this city of heat and strife.

So we trot down the highway to Ostia, the harbour, which has a fortress on one bank, and on a sandbar a lighthouse built upon an old wreck. A lovely spot, and it is pleasant to see the blue Mediterranean—"Mare Nostrum," we call it in our pride—and to feel the cooling breezes. All along the shore road are the villas of the fortunate ones, some of them our friends, and some of them new-rich upstarts who have made millions in war contracts and speculations, but who could not hire us to

come to one of their banquets for all the treasure they own. As a rule it is true that the newest and most showy places are those which you do not visit, while those which have a touch of old-fashionedness, and even of decay, are the ones in which you find the real families, having the masks of scores of their progenitors hung up in their atria.

Our own place is one of the oldest, but the house has been remodelled and made over in the more elegant modern style. It has wide porticoes in front, and high columns going up to the roof, and all about it a display of gardens which is the marvel of the coast. For gardens are something you cannot get in a hurry, and therefore it is permitted to make a display. We have every kind of ornamental tree—laurel, pomegranate, myrtle and plane; we have gnarled old olive trees, and orange trees, whose age no man can guess, and ivy covering our walls with stems as thick as a giant's thighs. We have beds of roses and violets and narcissi; we have sun-houses full of strange fruits from Africa, and box hedges clipped in every fantastic form you can imagine. Our gardeners have an art of sculpture in living green; you see bells and ships and riders on horseback, and Medusa heads, and even images of leading statesmen—of our own party, needless to say!

My family is surprised to see me, and welcomes me with open arms. How good it is to be among them, and to enjoy their love and appreciation! I do not need to change myself in order to obtain their favour; no, they like me as I am, and my ideas do not provoke storms of ridicule and denunciation! No danger here, no strife; I drink long draughts of peace and satisfaction. Here is where I belong, and I realize the absurdity of the dreams I have been cherishing. I will stay in this heavenly retreat, and my mother and sisters will be my nurses,

more faithful and more devoted than any who can be hired for gold.

I sit upon the portico, reclining, and letting the sea breeze fan the fever from my brow. I watch the pleasure-boats and fishing vessels scattered over the water. Presently the tricliniarchus announces the midday meal; how pleasant to have all the sea-foods, drawn from their watery retreats that very morning: sea-hedgehogs, and oysters from our own beds, and large luscious mussels made into patties; sea-nettles, black and white sea-acorns, and purple shell-fish of two sorts! How pleasant to have fruits that you have watched coming to ripeness upon trees which you know like old friends!

We all retire for a couple of hours, and I have my first sound sleep for a long time. In the late afternoon I walk about the gardens with my mother and sisters—oh, how glad they are to have me back, and how tenderly they try to convey the fact to me, and to hide from me their anxieties. For there is something wrong with me; they don't know what it is, and neither do I, quite clearly. I am a Roman, and yet not a Roman, and I know things which I must not mention to them, or they will decide that my brain has been injured beyond remedy.

The men of the family have been visiting. They return in time for the bath, a great ceremony among us; and after that we have the evening meal, preceded by the saying of grace by my grandfather. The meal is elaborate, served in several courses, the carving being done in modern fashion at a side-table. The gentlemen recline upon couches, on one elbow, while the ladies sit at table. There is a great deal of beautiful crystal and silver, especially the massive salt-cellar in the centre, a feature of every home. We live in the old style, with an abundance of everything; none of those fancy dishes which have

become the fad. Our food is plain, but of the best, and everything fresh, because three times a week a cart comes from Terrafabri, the ancestral home of the family; my father conducts this as a model farm, and it provides all we can eat, and presents for our friends and neighbours.

I do enjoy our country dishes: sow's udder and boar's head and boar's ribs; fowls dressed with flour, and boiled teals and roasted hares; fieldfares with asparagus, and beccaficoes, and of course much sea-food again, glycymerides and sphondyli. We finish with starch pastry sweetened with honey, and with all kinds of fruits. The meal is long drawn out, because conversation is an important part of it. We discuss the latest news which I have brought from Rome. We discuss the affairs of our friends, and the entertainments which have been given, the singers and dancers and actors who have displayed their arts before us. We discuss the food, for we are all interested in it; we know where it has come from, and how it should be cooked, and what flavour it should have. We discuss our household affairs, especially the servant problem, which troubles the ladies of this modern world — the seeming impossibility of finding servants who do not require all the time of their mistress to manage them. My mother does not say very much about this, and I know the reason—she is busy watching the servants, and making sure the meal goes without a hitch.

LXX

We Romans have an intense affection for our homes. They are shrines to us, inhabited by the spirits of our ancestors, whose masks, made of wax, hang upon the

wall. Among all who have not forsaken the old ways, family prayers are said every day. This binds the family together; also it binds the State, which we think of as an extension of the home, a solidarity of many, guaranteeing the safety of each. So our patriotism is bound up with our piety; when we talk about public affairs, res publicæ, we think of them as matters which belong to our ancestors, who have handed them down to us, and who still, from the land of shades, watch over us and guide our consultations.

The men of the family sit upon the portico in the cool of the evening, by the light of the stars; the senator, his son, and his son-in-law, my Uncle Martinus Silvester, from the far Etruscan country in the North-west. I sit and listen to the wisdom of my elders; if I venture a remark, it will be with deference. They discuss the state of the Republic, and I note that they are all dissatisfied, but far apart in their remedies. Seeking guidance as I am, I have a variety of choices.

This much they agree upon: Rome is passing rapidly out of control of the old patrician families, and under the sway of the equites, or knights, the newly arrived men of money. The resources of these upstarts are overwhelming, and nothing can keep them from having their way. For them everything has a price, and nothing is real but cash; they buy honours, preferment, friends, love—they even buy ancestral masks and family trees, and shrines at which to worship. They build themselves palaces, and fill them with works of art like junk-shops; they set standards of extravagance which corrupt the whole of society. In a single generation, Rome has changed under our eyes; the old people stand appalled at the licence and recklessness of the young. Piety is gone, faith in the gods, and family solidarity, sobriety, public

honour. The revelations of corruption, both at home and abroad, fill us with fear for the future of the Republic.

Such is the condition; and what is to be done about it? My stern old rustic uncle desires to use the power of the law to punish all corruptionists. Build bigger and worse jails, and fill them with the bribe-givers and takers, the men who traffic in privileges in the Forum, and those who spend their ill-gotten gains upon the purchase of forbidden luxuries. Let us elect a censor who really believes in law enforcement; let us have a crusade, as in the good old days of Marcus Porcius Cato.

That, of course, starts my father off on his favourite hobby, his hatred of prohibition. There is no worse folly, he insists, than the idea that men's private habits can be regulated by law. What greater insult to a gentleman, than to tell him what kind of wines he may serve upon his table? What greater outrage than to send officers of the censor to violate the sanctity of his home, and drag him to jail, because, forsooth, he has an embossed silver tray which weighs more than a hundred pounds! Manifestly, no free Roman is going to respect such laws, and the result is to bring all law into contempt.

The head of our family, Senator Faber, is skilled in the arts of debate, and the reconciling of contending factions. So now he intervenes between my father and my uncle, and says that the wise man will select among the evils which he attempts to correct. Many are merely symptoms, and the task of the statesman is to find those which are causes. What is the real, fundamental source of the decay of manners and morals in Rome?

My uncle from the country trots forth his favourite hobby, the farm problem; the fact that the land of Italy is being depopulated, and the population drawn away into cities. Country people are pious, country people

are honest and healthy and sound. He quotes the Greek poet, Menander, that " men are taught virtue and a love of independence by living in the country." Yes, it is the riff-raff of the city slums from whom disturbances and corruption arise. Look at this labour strike, verging closely upon a rebellion against the State; if all these poor wretches were sent back to work the land, then they would be contented and useful. It seems to me that my Uncle Martinus is not so very far from Marcia in his politics, and it occurs to me that I might find in him an ally in my efforts to end the strife and to win my beloved.

But my father breaks in, and I see how hopeless the situation is. My father says the vile caitiffs do not want to go back to the land, and would be useless there. They want shows and spectacles, and free bread—" panem et circenses." They are idle ruffians, runaway soldiers and criminals, and their effort to get more pay is simply in order that they may have time to loaf, and watch the puppet-shows and conjurors, and drink themselves sodden. They must be made to feel the strong arm of the law, and the real danger to Rome is that they are learning to frighten the rascally politicians by the power of their ballots.

So it appears that my father also wants to build bigger and worse jails; only he wants to fill them with a different class of persons. He never tires of denouncing the laxity of law-officers, who permit the crime wave to spread. He clamours for a sort of extra-legal body, somewhat like my bunch of Legion men, to go out and seize the thieves and hold-up men, and string them up to the nearest trees. He becomes excited about it, which is bad for his health; in the spread of crime, in the spread of labour discontent, of infidelity and libertinism, he sees himself personally defied and set at nought—and likewise the manes of his

ancestors, the lares and penates of his home, and all the mighty gods of the Roman Pantheon. It is sacrilege, treason, the ultimate of nefas, and my irritable progenitor sits with hands clenched and veins standing out upon his forehead, calling vengeance upon the ungodly forces of this modern age.

LXXI

I AM pained by this excess of emotion, so after a time I find a pretext to stroll to the other end of the portico, where my mother sits with my sisters and a group of young people who have come to call. Here all is merriment and freedom. If there are troubles in the world, these young people do not know it.

They greet me with cheers, and with mocking allusions to my recent misfortunes. All those things which my older friends have referred to with tender commiseration become here a theme for ribaldry. I am the champion driver of upturned chariots—since it appears that my four horses dragged me half-way round the course after the accident. I am challenged to a wrestling match—by way of jesting about my dislocated shoulder. I am hailed as Lucius the giant-killer—a reference to Agri. Again, I am an infant just out of my mother's arms, weaned upon goat's milk. They know all about me, and every detail is a subject for witticisms. If I say something with which they disagree, they tell me that I got my poll cracked in the arena, and that my wits are scrambled.

There is a feud between these youngsters and myself, because I have been outspoken as to the folly and wastefulness of the new generation. Their jests are offensive to good taste, but there is nothing I can do about it, for they

are impervious to rebuke. They merely break into gales of laughter; they dance and romp about me, and rumple my hair, and pull my tunic about my neck. They drown out my angry words with their shouts, and then away they dash, and leap upon their horses, sometimes two or three on a single steed, and gallop off like a troop of demons.

I sit and listen in silence. This is the new generation, which is going to take charge of Rome when we are gone; and what are they going to make of it? I try to picture it, but my imagination fails. In truth, they know nothing about public affairs whatever. Why should they, I ask myself; they have had everything handed to them; they have had servants to obey their slightest command. Is not the blame rather with their parents, who have permitted them to be brought up in this fashion? Or is it an inevitable consequence of the spread of wealth and luxury? The fathers are handling great sums of money, and the mothers are gadding about, amusing themselves after the style of the so-called " new woman."

I tell myself that here is the result of the new system of education by foreigners! Everything that is old Roman is crude and provincial here; all true refinement comes from overseas. Licence comes, and mockery at religion, and contempt for the old ways; really it is a fact, to say that a thing is " new " is to praise it, and the highest praise of all is to call it the " latest "! What a strange inversion of moral and æsthetic standards!

There is nothing these young people will not laugh at; nothing they will not discuss in the presence of both youths and maidens. They are restrained now by my majestic mother; but when they are alone—Mehercule, I have heard the girls with my brother Quintus, and they are informed about Lesbianism, and every sort of monstrous vice. They affect to take a casual attitude to

such matters, as if they were listening to a medical lecture. This thought causes my mind to fly off to Marcia, who also considers herself an " emancipated " person, and has, no doubt, been told in the nosocomium many things which ought never to be in the mind of a pure woman.

Silence is the only recourse among these young bandits of ideas. Such a pose of sophistication! Such confidence in themselves! They have seen the latest Cretan dancer, the latest Athenian wall-painting; they know the gossip about the latest courtesan who appears upon our stage; they have heard about the latest Alexandrian philosopher, who purports to explain the stories of our gods as symbols, embodying phenomena of sun and moon and seasons and so on. I listen, and think suddenly that I can answer the question of my grandfather, what is the real, fundamental source of the decay of manners and morals in Rome. I decide that I am, like my rustic uncle, a " fundamentalist." I say it is the spread of this foreign poison, this atheism masquerading as " free thought," which is destroying us. I renew my resolve, that if ever I become a senator, there will be a law that will drive it out of our country, and bring back the old-time religion that was good enough for my fathers, and is good enough for me.

Yes, I agree absolutely with Uncle Martinus, the officers of the censor should have power to invade the homes of even the wealthiest and most cultured Roman gentlemen! But it will not be to seize expensive foreign wines and too massive silver plate; no, it will be to seize the writings of Democritus, the materialist, and of Antisthenes, the cynic, and of Epicurus, who—whatever he has meant to teach—has in effect put this one idea into the heads of our young people, that the only purpose in life is pleasure, and the test of excellence is whether a thing gives you a " good time."

LXXII

I REALIZE that I belong with the previous generation, and so I return to the other end of the portico, where my elders are discussing the class struggle throughout the world. My revered father is on the subject of Eunus: the blindness and folly of our Government in permitting this menace to civilization to entrench itself in Sicily, and form a military base for the launching of attacks against law and order in Rome. Sooner or later we shall have to assemble the necessary forces and rout this rebel out. Why not now, before the poison of discontent has spread more widely among the proletarians?

Says my Uncle Martinus, it is all right to subdue Eunus, of course; but how can his poison spread here, unless there is some cause of discontent among us? Is it not a part of statesmanship to find that evil and remedy it, so that no outside agitator can find fuel for his fires? My uncle insists that our artisans can no longer get a living wage, because of the fact that the big capitalists are allowed to purchase slaves abroad and bring them whclesale into Italy. If this goes on, in another hundred years there will be no free labour left in our Republic. The remedy is to reduce the importation of slaves—to put it on a " quota basis," in my uncle's phrase.

Again they are at it, hammer and tongs. To my father, this matter of interfering with the free processes of capital, the right of the business man to seek his profit wherever he can find it, is the essence of tyranny and demagogy. Our only chance to keep these insolent workers down is to have slaves to compete with them; what would we be doing, right now in Rome, if we could not hold this whip

over the guilds? What would become of our industry without abundant labour? Our productive capacity, our prosperity, that is the marvel of the whole world——

My Uncle Martin responds that to him our prosperity is highly suspect. It is going to the few rich capitalists and speculators, and is resulting in an enormous development of the luxury trades. We are ransacking the earth for exquisite silks and bright-coloured dyes, to enable purse-proud upstarts to make themselves and their courtesans more conspicuous in the theatres. All the labour of Rome is going into the bedecking of these swinish creatures—wholesale gamblers and bribers——

"Now, Martinus!" interposes the senator. "Surely you are exaggerating a little! We still produce some useful articles of commerce!"

"I am pointing out the trend of things," insists the other. "Our country is changing under our eyes, and we don't know what is happening, because we allow the scandals to be concealed. As the mighty Cato phrased it: 'The theft of private property lands the thief in stocks and fetters, but the State thief swaggers in purple and gold.' What would that heroic man say if he could be alive to-day, and know what you and I know about the contractors who made hundreds of millions, swindling our Government with rotten warships, and shields of imitation leather, and swords of tin? And now look at what they are doing with their filthy lucre! See the extravagance and display of our women—the moving up of the underworld to take possession of society! I can remember, and so can you, the day when a woman who painted her lips and cheeks was assumed to be a self-branded prostitute; but see our girls now—carrying their cosmetic bags and painting themselves on the streets! Why, there are women among us who no longer know how to bake

bread. They send to bakers' shops for it, and buy their roasted meats in delicatessen parlours! And see what has become of our home life! "

I venture to interpose a comment. " My dear uncle, it happened the other day that I had a conversation with one of the followers of Tiberius Sempronius Gracchus, and it would seem that your ideas are not so far apart from his."

" There you have it! " exclaims my father, in excitement. " That is exactly what I tell Martinus, he will find himself in the camp of these out-and-out revolutionaries—these inciters of the rabble, seeking to overthrow our constitution and bring our social system down in ruins."

" I desire nothing of that sort," replies my uncle. " I merely point out to you the evils which are growing——"

" Whether you mean it or not, whether you realize it or not, you are lending aid to fanatical incendiaries! Men who are working day and night to incite the baser elements, and lead Rome to a civil war! If that is your idea of the Republic—a crude and shameless democracy—a government by the lousy loafers—then I say the quicker we crush such movements, the better for the Roman State."

" But," says my uncle mildly, " that sounds as if you, my good Lucius, were also willing to contemplate the advantages of revolutionary action. How can you claim that right and deny it to the plebs? "

My father has become red in the face, and is about to make a hot reply, when the venerable head of our household intervenes.

" Gently, my sons, gently! If we wish to avoid disorders in the State, let us begin by suppressing them in our own hearts. These problems are of grave complexity, and the wisest men of all times have been unable to agree concerning them."

These words bring silence; and I venture another remark. " Might it not be, grandfather, that there is *no* solution to these problems? "

" How could that be, my son? "

" It happens that just before I left the city I was reading a passage from that learned historian whom we have recently enjoyed meeting. It impressed me so that I memorized it. Polybius says: ' For as rust is the canker of iron, and worms destroy wood, and as these substances, even though they may escape a violent end, at last fall prey to the decay that is, as it were, natural to them, in the same manner, likewise, in every government there is a particular vice inherent in it, which is attached to its very nature, and which brings it to a close. Thus royalty degenerates into tyranny, artistocracy in oligarchy, and democracy into savage violence and anarchy.' "

" Those are indeed sentences to give us pause," says the head of our house. " But I think it is necessary to remind ourselves that Polybius is a Greek, and therefore predisposed to pessimism. He has watched the degeneration of his own Republic, and those of his neighbours, and it would be perhaps too much to expect that he should grant to us Romans a higher capacity."

" What do you think, grandfather? " I ask. " Shall we succeed in avoiding those dangers which brought down the Athenians? "

The senator ponders my question, and we all await his reply with respect. For this is the wisest man among us, one whom we shall not know how to replace. He has lived long, and studied men and governments; he carries inside his head the details of more than one hundred and fifty treaties which our Roman State has made with its allies and dependencies—no two arrangements alike, and many of them highly complicated. He has read the

histories of previously existing states; and now he tells us:

"My sons, we have here in Rome a mighty system, which is the wonder of the world, and will be the glory of future times. It seems beyond thinking that this sublime structure should go the way of other republics. We have the advantage of the Greeks, in that we come after them, and have the record of their blunders to study and profit by. We have a constitution of perfection such that it seems more than human, and we have to believe that our ancestors received help from the immortals. We witness the spread of knowledge, the world-wide triumph of our arms, our increase in wealth and in the respect of our neighbours—no, I think we can feel certain that the problem of world-government has been solved, and that our name is not a vain boast among the nations, but a revelation of divine intention: Ave, Roma Æterna!"

We are heartened by this impromptu speech from a great orator, and I accept his authority, like the others. Of course I might say, out of my knowledge as an American: "Grandfather, it happens that I can tell you the Roman Republic will be dead in less than a hundred years." But what sort of a hit would that have made? I bethink me of the wisdom of the poet Menander: "Nothing is more useful to a man than silence!"

LXXIII

In these pleasant country surroundings my physical strength comes back quickly. I amuse myself playing with my horses and dogs; I gather flowers in the garden with my sisters; I walk on the beaches and watch the fishermen bringing in their strange, many-coloured catches;

I ride my pony, and visit my neighbours and enjoy their kindly welcome. A serene and happy life.

My pious mother does not forget the debt of gratitude she owes to the gods for the prompt recovery of her son. She never fails to pay her debts—that is perhaps the reason why the gods favour her in so many ways. There is a pantheon on the outskirts of Ostia, with many shrines, where one can worship any or all of the gods, and mother finds this convenient, for hers is a blanket gratitude; she cannot be sure which divinity has aided me, but she will give thanks to all she can think of. Surely there is less risk in thanking a god for something he did not do, than in failing to thank one for something he did! Perhaps up there in heaven they exchange jests over their rivalries and our blunders!

It is the day of the Feriæ Furrinæ, an old country festival now for the most part forgotten. But mother believes in keeping these traditional ceremonies alive. They are picturesque and harmless—certainly better than the reckless entertainments of the modern style, the Greek orgies, and the sex dramas and musical comedies. What more pleasant than for people to assemble in the open air on a bright summer's day, bringing the kindly fruits of the earth to the temple, marching in processions, and offering tributes both of gifts and of praise to those high beings who preserved our ancestors, and helped in the founding of our great State? What better for our children, and our young men and maidens, than the singing of lovely old anthems and carols and offertories?

So mother gathers our friends and neighbours, and all the servants who can be spared from the place, and the many dependents upon her bounty. They put on their best summer costumes, and proceed to the temple, where they find the flamen and his assistant, and a large choir

assembled. Mother can command all these things, because she has paid for the singing master to train the choir, and is one of the main supports of the pantheon. She brings a wagon-load of gifts, fresh from Terrafabri, so that even the poorest of the worshippers may have something to present. The fruits and bread and roast meats are laid upon the altar, and some wine and milk and honey are poured out for a libation, the rest being left for the flamen and his assistant. It is all welcome, for, with the spread of scepticism among the wealthy, these poor fellows do not live any too splendidly.

There is a very pleasant social atmosphere about the temple; you see the old friends you have met at every ceremony since you were a child, and you exchange greetings, and maybe a few words of gossip about the family, while you stand in the shade of the portico, with the white marble demigods looking down on you, their heads covered with wire netting to keep off the disrespectful sparrows. I am one of those who have to hurry to the rear of the sacred grove, where the choir is forming for the procession. I slip on a white surplice and take my place in the line. Already the players of the lyre have struck up the first chords, and the shrill notes of the flutes pierce the air. The little white cherubs who sing are being shepherded into line, pinching each other and dropping licorice lozenges down each other's necks. I say hello to the other choirmen, and bow politely to the flamen and his assistant, who bring up the rear of the procession. Suddenly the choirmaster gives the signal, and the music swells louder, and two-score voices are lifted in an ancient chant which has come down to us from the Greeks, celebrating the origin of all the gods, and calling upon the Muses nine to attend our festival and lend us their eloquence:

" Hail, daughters of Jupiter, and give the lovely song! And sing the sacred race of immortals ever-existing, who sprang from Earth, and starry Heaven, and murky Night, whom the briny Deep nourished."

So we march, through the aisle made by the thronging worshippers, and up to the temple and around it: first of all the bearer of the golden ægis of the healing Apollo, and then the little tots with their piccolo flute voices, and the larger boys, graded up to the men, who sing baritone, with four enormous bass voices roaring behind: all of us carrying open books in front of our tummies, but not looking at them, because we know by heart this venerable " Theogony," anthem of our faith. I find the scene very pleasant, but my description of it is touched with the mockery of my brother, who never tires of laughing at me for becoming inspired with singing in a temple choir. If I could only see how absurd I look with my mouth so wide open! I remind him that I got my instructions from the best singing teacher in our city; and I am not there to be looked at, but to be listened to. Quintus demands to know why then we don't stay inside the temple and sing. Why, unless we imagine we look pretty, do we go parading all over the place?

Out of the corner of my eye I see my family, standing in a group on the temple steps: my grandfather, the senator, white-haired, but still erect, distinguished-looking with his purple-striped toga and red shoes; then his sister, my Great-aunt Delia; my father with his hair beginning to grey, and his figure a little too stout; my mother, with purple flowers embroidered in her very beautiful palla; my Uncle Martinus, the rusticus, big-boned and heavy-fisted, plain and forthright; my two sisters, Gratia, very devout and good, and Amanda, gay but innocent. That is our family, the cynosure of all eyes here; and I feel

myself a part of them, and of this noble religious organization, which binds us together, embodying and expressing our faith. I am singing for them and to them, as I praise the heavenly nine who have taught us these arts of poetry, music, and worship:

"Come, thou, begin we with the Muses, who, as they sing, delight the great spirit of Jupiter, their sire, within Olympus, telling of the present, and the future, and the past, according to their voice; and from the lips sweet speech flows ceaselessly, whilst the halls of loud-thundering Jupiter, their sire, are glad at the delicate utterance of the goddesses, diffused around; and the top of snowy Olympus rings, and the mansions of the immortals."

The flamen pours out the libations, and renders thanks for the early harvests, and for deliverance from the sicknesses of midsummer; he offers the thanks of my family and myself to Æsculapius, and to Apollo, delighting in arrows. The choir sings a narrative of the origin of these gods, both holy Father and compassionate Son; they sing an account of their wondrous healing deeds, performed in this temple and elsewhere. Nor do we forget to praise our local deities, for our religion allows for human nature —giving our people almost as many objects of worship as do the Catholics. We include in our prayers the founder of our faith, and of our city, now mistress of the world. We sing the origin of our Father Æneas; how "fair-wreathed Cytherea, too, I wot, blending in delightsome love with the hero Anchises, bare Æneas on the peaks of the many-valleyed, woody Ida."

There is a strong sensuous element in our religion; we love our rocks and rills, our woods and templed hills; and also our imaginations are stirred by the processes of generation, whereby flocks and herds, as well as heroes and demi-gods, are brought to mankind. I sing of the

" blending in delightsome love " of many gods with earthly maidens, and my heart is wrung, and a pang stabs me, because I cannot blend in delightsome love with Marcia. Who can tell what mighty statesman and founder of cities might spring from such a union?

LXXIV

So I come home from our festival, not healed in heart, but rather with misery increased. In vain I play with my horses and dogs; in vain I join in gentle games with my sisters. I am not yet strong enough for archery, or hand-ball, or the game of trigon, in which we try to keep the ball away from our opponents; but the forms of play more suitable for ladies, such as rolling a ball through wickets, and the game of knuckle-bones—these we play by the hour. I might get interested in playing at dice, but this is forbidden by law, and mother will not permit us to break the law, because of the moral effect upon the servants.

It does not help me to sail my skiff, or to watch the fishermen, or to ride my pony, or to visit my friends. No matter what I do, I go on thinking about Marcia. I engage in long debates with her, ending invariably in rages, either on her part or on mine. Or else I am explaining her to my family and friends—and having no easy time of it! Or I am imagining the dreadful things which may be happening to her in the strike riots.

I make every effort to drive these fancies away. I say: " I will go back to Hortensia. She is gentle and good. I will force myself to be worthy of her affection. I will be what she wishes, and what my mother and my sisters wish."

I owe my betrothed a visit; since she and her mother came to see me in the nosocomium, it would be a cruel affront not to return the courtesy as soon as I am able. So I ride down the shore to the villa of Sertorius Manlius, the wealthy equester; and Hortensia and I wander in the gardens, and sit upon a stone bench, with a sun-dial in front of us, and a marble Silenus in back, and the odour of a sea of blossoms in the air. I think: "Yes, she is lovely, she is as good as a woman can be; but what am I going to talk to her about?" She tells me all the pleasant nothings of family life here at the shore; this neighbour's new baby, and that one's new lawn-party—and all the time I am saying to myself: "What can have become of Marcia?"

Marcia is almost everything in the world of which I disapprove in a woman; yet still I cannot help thinking about her. She is fire, she is energy, she is character; she has the fascination of the unknown, of the sublime, the godlike; while poor little Hortensia is the everyday, the placid, and the dull. I know that I will seem morose, a boor; yet I cannot bring myself to speak of love, nor of our engagement.

She tells me of her terror when she saw me overset in the arena; and how it was exactly according to her premonition. We talk about such "hunches," and other psychic problems, in which so many people in Rome believe. I know that Hortensia is longing to hear me say that I am through with chariot-racing; I have told that freely to others, but I do not tell it to her, because I resent her trying to dominate my life. I know the poor girl will be wounded by my coldness; she will understand that some other woman is to blame, and will be sure it is Virginia—such a roué I am! But there is nothing I want to do about it, and when her chatter stops, and the conversation dies, I make no attempt to revive it.

I go home in a rage with myself; but I cannot help it.

It is Marcia I want, and lacking Marcia, I continue to curse fate, and ruin the happiness of all who are near me. I go for a walk, aimlessly, over the distant hills, where the half-wild shepherds tend vast flocks for those great corporations, concerning which my uncle is so disturbed in his mind. It is not a safe place for a man to wander alone, especially with my partly restored shoulder; but I take my chance, being out of love with life.

When I come back to my home, dinnerless and exhausted, I find waiting for me a letter which a servant has brought from the Manlius place. Something tells me what it contains, and I read it without a pang:

"My Dear Lucius,—For a long time I have realized that between us there is lacking that which ought to be between a man and his betrothed. I do not know what the matter can be; I am not conscious of having failed in any duty that a woman owes under such circumstances. But I know that you are not satisfied with me, and I think you are sacrificing your happiness to please your parents. I am explaining this to my father, and hope you will explain it to yours, so that our betrothal may be ended with as little grief as possible. I write this with no feeling of unkindness, but much sorrow, and I wish you happiness and success in whatever it is that represents your real desire."

So there it is. I have known it must come, but now I find myself a trifle vexed at the presumption of a daughter of Manlius, a mere member of the knights, in refusing a husband of senatorial rank. Also I am impressed by her spirit, and wonder if I have not misjudged her. But I put all this aside—I know that I cannot marry Hortensia, and my parents will have to bear this great disappointment, even as I am bearing others.

And yet—how am I to tell them? How can I explain, without mentioning the unmentionable Marcia? Lacking that information, my mother and father will conclude, just as Hortensia has done, that it is Virginia who is wrecking their hopes. Can there be anything more humiliating to a man who aspires to be reserved and dignified, than to realize that he has entangled his life with three different females at the same time? Because I cannot bear to explain such a shame to my parents, and hardly even to admit it to myself, I wander out into the garden and stay there until the rest of the family has retired.

LXXV

It is an ancient saying that misfortunes never come singly; and so now with the Faber family. Next morning comes my brother, having ridden down from Rome; his wrinkled face is more than ever marked with worry, and he takes me apart and reveals the calamity which has befallen him. A shipmaster recently arrived from Neapolis has brought to him a letter from Camilla, his wife, in which this specimen of the new womanhood calmly informs her husband that she has decided their marriage is a mistake from the point of view of both of them, and desires him, either to take steps to divorce her, or to permit her to do it, and agree to make no opposition!

And what is a member of the patrician class of Rome to make of such a proposition? I have in me the soul of the old Roman, who, under such circumstances, would have sought out the faithless woman and her paramour, and put them both to the sword. But I know that all this is out of date, and I will only make myself ridiculous if I mention it. No, I cannot even take the occasion to point

out to my brother how this calamity follows from the licentious doctrines he has been proclaiming. Here is your "feminism," your "equality of the sexes"! The holy bonds of matrimony are no more than an old shoe, which these moderns cast aside when the style changes—as it does frequently in both footwear and loves. Our prodigious increase in wealth since the war has brought with it a plague of "free" women, who set at nought all duties, not merely of motherhood and housekeeping, but of the marriage bed. We have in fashionable "society" women who have contracted bogus marriages, whereby they are enabled to keep entire control of their property; so they live their own lives, and have such lovers as they prefer.

But I must not say all this—for the uncomfortable reason that I also am in a sexual entanglement, of which I cannot foresee the issue. I also have a disgrace which I am hiding from my parents. I may have to take Quintus into my confidence; so now I must manage to be "up-to date," and take this news calmly, and advise him as to the best way to break it to our parents. Quintus himself, I find, agrees with Camilla, that since they are not happy they should part. His only concern is because mother and father are victims of "old-fashioned prejudices," and will think that the Faber family is suffering a dreadful humiliation.

Quintus passes on to me the news of Rome; some of it of greater importance to me than he can realize. It appears that the labour revolt is about to be brought to an end. The manufacturers, headed by Calvus, have appealed to the Pontifex Maximus, who has declared that the artisans are committing an act of sacrilege in living upon the Sacer Mons; he has ordered them to leave. So now, if any fighting results, it will be the plebs and not the soldiery who will be held responsible by the gods. The consuls

have ordered the hill cleared by to-morrow morning, and all Rome is in a ferment of excitement.

My brother is surprised by the way this news affects me. I cannot conceal my concern, and have to pretend that it is political. " This means civil war! " I exclaim; and Quintus wants to know what of that—have I not always insisted that the poor devils should be driven out? I say that I must be on hand; and he does not understand what I mean Can't I trust the job to the troops? Do I have to bathe my own hands in the gore? I answer that I have promised my friends of the Legion to be on hand to advise them in these matters, and now I am failing in a promise.

I say that I must think things over, and I walk away. But in truth, I do not have to do any thinking at all—I know what I am going to do. I will ride to Rome as fast as horses can take me, and I will save Marcia, with or without her consent. There is not a moment to be lost. I give the orders to a couple of servants, and commission another to explain matters to my father. The horses are bridled—we Romans ride them without saddles. We do not stop for baggage, nor even for money for the journey; we mount and ride away upon the high road to the city.

LXXVI

Now I have opportunity to think, and realize that the time for words is past. I am going to get Rufus Hanno, and Picus, the pugil, and half a dozen of my old fighting men, and ride to that camp on the Sacer Mons. I am not going to do any arguing with Marcia, nor with her brother and the revolutionists; I am going to carry her away, and take her to Terrafabri, the old homestead of my family, some thirty miles from Rome. We will travel by night, and

once I have her there, she will be safe; on that vast estate my word is the only law—unless my father or grandfather should come to supplant me. I will keep her in my power, and there will be no more nonsense about her plebs and her Gracchi.

As I make this resolve, something stirs in my blood, and I know that I shall be a more ardent wooer now. Never could I have thought that I would possess a woman against her will; but there is a complex of motives here—I know that I love Marcia, and that she knows I love her. I know also, or at this moment I think I know, that she loves me. The destiny of a woman is to submit herself to a man; and once she has done this, she realizes the truth—regardless of what rubbish of modern sophistication has been packed into her mind.

Moreover, there is this fact to be remembered, that in Marcia I am dealing with a dangerous law-breaker. I will be saving society from her, and I will be saving her from herself, and from the legal consequences of her folly. I realize how those of her way of thinking would ridicule such a set of arguments; nevertheless, they represent my convictions. Right or wrong, heroic or criminal, these are the thoughts and feelings about Marcia which are filling my mind as I push my tough little Numidian pony the twenty miles to the city.

I ride directly to the Cometes factory, and summon Rufus Hanno to my office. I tell him that Marcia is a dangerous conspirator, and that I have reason to think I can get from her vital information concerning the intrigues of Eunus in Rome. Therefore I want to take her away from the Sacred Mount, or wherever she may be. That is enough for my faithful drill-sergeant, who would say all right if I told him I wished to descend into the infernal regions and take Queen Persephone from her black throne.

There are a couple of the veterani in the factory, who have been in the cavalry, and are tough riders. We need several more, I figure, in addition to those I have brought from the shore. We decide upon Picus, the pugil, and a couple of others who can be found without delay. Rufus undertakes to get them, and also to hire extra horses. From the stables of our town-house I will get fresh mounts for myself and the servants. The party is to assemble at my father's house at the hour of sunset; and meantime I decide to pay a call upon Clarentus Calvus, who, I am certain, will tell me the status of affairs at the moment, and the plans of police and soldiery for the suppression of the revolt.

I find my bald-headed friend in fine fettle. He has succeeded in his long campaign to rouse the authorities; at last Rome is to be delivered from Eunus! It has cost him and his associates a pretty penny, he tells me, and the first thing he does is to strike me for a contribution, which I, of course, cheerfully pledge. I believe in the solidarity of the propertied classes; when I was a child, I learned the fable of the bundle of sticks, in the story of the Greek slave, Æsop. I now remind Calvus of this story, and suggest that we manufacturers take that bundle of sticks, the fasces, for a symbol of our organization. I give him a slogan: "In union there is strength." He is tremendously pleased by this inspiration, and tells me I should undertake literary composition.

I do not have to ask any questions; he pours out the news in a flood. The troops are not merely going to drive the strikers away from the hill in the morning; they are going to arrest the ring-leaders as soon as they are off the consecrated ground. The spy, Albus, is there, and two other secret agents whom I do not know, and these have furnished to Calvus a list of the dangerous

seditionists, and Calvus has passed it on to the commander of the legionaries.

Olivus Pennus is among them, and there is now positive proof that he has received a letter from Eunus. Marcia also is among them—" your charming lady friend," is the way Calvus refers to her, with a sly little wink; when they get her in jail again, they will be more efficient in getting information from her than I was. It seems that she has been making speeches to the strikers, urging them to stand fast upon the Sacer Mons, in spite of the injunction of the ædile and the decree of the Pontifex Maximus. " Virago contumacissima! " I exclaim, and my friend the manufacturer of amphoræ echoes the words. He is making plans to reopen his factory in a couple of days, certain that his workers will be obliged to capitulate.

LXXVII

I TAKE my departure, knowing all that I need to know, and firmer than ever in my resolve to save this unfortunate young woman both from her enemies and herself. I ride to my father's house, and pack a few necessities for the sojourn in the hills—I mean it to be a long one. I get a bite to eat, and dispatch a note for my father, apologizing for my sudden departure. The servants, meanwhile, have the horses ready, and promptly as the sun disappears below the horizon, come Rufus and Picus, with four of our veterani.

We set out, threading our way in single file through the slum district which leads to the river. We are ferried across, nine of us, in two boats, and we ride towards the Sacer Mons in small parties, as inconspicuously as possible. At the foot of the hill is a settlement, and

Rufus rides ahead, and comes back and reports the lay of the land. There is a little wine-shop, about which a gathering of men will attract no attention. Three men will hold the horses, leaving six free, and these will surround the rendezvous, far enough away not to be conspicuous, but near enough to converge at a signal. Every detail is arranged, and every contingency provided for, so far as we are able to foresee it.

Rufus goes in among the strikers. He is stopped at the foot of the hill—these insolent rebels having dared to take the place for their own, and to maintain military order. Rufus explains that he has a message for Albus, and when he is admitted, finds the spy, and takes him apart, and says he comes from Calvus, who wishes to make an offer to Marcia Penna. Rufus tells the spy that the manufacturer is secretly dealing with Marcia for her safety. This is hard on the girl, I admit, but as I mean to force a complete break between her and her party, I figure that this story can do her no harm.

Rufus requests the spy to see Marcia and tell her—not that Calvus wants her, for that, says Rufus, would betray Albus himself as a spy. Albus is to say that a messenger, from Cornelia, the mother of the Gracchi, is waiting for Marcia at the back of the wine-shop, the Blue Peacock, west of the hill. This will keep Albus clear of suspicion—so Rufus assures him. The spy is satisfied, and pockets a gold coin and goes off to find the girl.

It is dark now, and I am waiting, and find my knees trembling, so that I wonder if I can keep my seat upon my horse when the gallop begins. This is not fear, but the very terrible way in which every thought of Marcia affects me. Now is the crisis of my longings. Any minute I shall know whether I am to have her or not.

If this attempt fails, it may be the last, for it would be hard to get a chance at her after she has been locked up in jail.

I am peering from behind a house, and see a woman's white robe pass down the lane. I know it is Marcia, and my heart begins to pound so that I am half dizzy. I perceive the forms of three or four men following her. I cannot be sure in the darkness, but I think these are not our fellows; they must be friends of hers, who fear some trap and have come to guard her. Such a happening has been provided for in our plans; each of our fellows has a good stout cudgel under his tunic, and the orders are to hit hard and quick, for there must be no delay in our getaway. This wine-shop may be full of strikers and sympathizers, and doubtless there are scores of others within call.

I step out from concealment and see our fellows converging upon the agreed spot in a swift rush. That which I have to describe happens more quickly than one can read the words. Marcia sees half a dozen men surrounding her, and she realizes that she is in a trap, and gives a cry. Her friends rush to defend her, and one of them—it is her brother—draws a knife and slashes out at one of our crowd. There are curses, and the sound of clubs falling. A blow is aimed at the wielder of the knife, and Marcia springs to intercept it, and catches it full upon the temple.

I am close, and see this; in fact, I have my hands upon her, and she is trying to tear loose from me when the blow falls. She sinks into my arms and I cry out in horror: "Marcia! Marcia!" I feel a gush of blood, hot and slimy, upon my hands; and suddenly I am seized by that dizziness which has been troubling me so much of late. Everything sways and grows black before me.

I am sobbing her name—such is the last memory I have of my sojourn in Roma Æterna.

LXXVIII

THERE is a gap, about which I can tell nothing; then a dim trace of consciousness, in which I know that Marcia is dead. I am racked with such grief as I can make no attempt to describe. I try to think where I am and what has happened—and I become vaguely aware of hands touching me, clasping me, and of voices crying in my neighbourhood.

" Marcia! Marcia! " I moan. " Don't die! I didn't mean to hurt you! " I plead and beg her to come back to life; I hear a voice replying, but it is not Marcia's.

At first I am too dazed to comprehend, but gradually I realize that it is my mother, and that she too is sobbing, and I hear her say: " Oh, Luke, don't you know me? Luke, come back to me! "

I have the thought: " How can my mother be here? And where am I, anyway? " I open my eyes and look, and I see a bright light which dazzles me. Getting used to it, I see my mother, I hear her pleading with me to " know " her. Of course it is easy for me to " know " her, so I smile. That brings her such an access of happiness that I do it again, and manage to whisper: " Yes, mother." She sobs: " Oh, thank God! "

I am thinking: " Mother was at the shore! How did she get here? " Then I wonder: " Is this the nosocomium, or is it the town-house? " I began to remember about Marcia, and how I fainted; I realize that I must be recovering consciousness—but where?

I go on whispering to my mother, responding to her

pleading to " come back." She appears to be frantic with the fear that I am going to faint again. As I don't seem likely to do it, I say: " I'm all right. What is the matter? Don't worry about me, mother. It is Marcia! Oh, mother, we have killed her! "

" Yes, son, yes," says my mother. " But that's all right, don't worry about that."

It seems an extraordinary remark; until I realize suddenly: " Mother doesn't know about Marcia! She thinks I am raving! " I decide: " There's no use keeping the secret now, since Marcia is dead." I begin to sob: " Oh, mother! mother! It's so horrible! What am I to do without her? "

" But, son, who is this Marcia? "

" She is the woman I love."

" But where did you love her, Luke? "

" I loved her everywhere I met her. She was a nurse —at the nosocomium."

" At the what, son? "

A sort of explosion takes place in my mind. I realize that my mother is speaking English, and I also am speaking English! It wasn't until I used a strange word, which my mother failed to understand, that the difference occurred to me! I stare at her, and see that her hair is short in the modern fashion, and that she has on a grey silk dress, and I realize: " I am in America again! " On a stand by the bedside is an electric fan, humming merrily, turning this way and that to sweep my bed. Also there is an electric light, carefully shaded from my eyes. Certainly that settles it; there were no electric fans or lights in Rome!

" Mother," I say, " my mind is confused, so help me, please."

" Yes, my son, of course."

" What is this place I am in? "

" It is the hospital."

" The Riverside Hospital? "

" Yes, Luke."

" Oh! Then you may have Marcia here. She was a nurse."

" No, I haven't met any such nurse."

" Marcia Penny was her name."

" I haven't heard of her."

" Oh," I say, " I forgot! She probably has been in jail."

" In jail, Luke? "

" I know it sounds crazy, but you'll find it's right. You see, she was a red, and she was arrested in the strike riots. But now she is dead—she was hit with a club."

It is one of the strangest aspects of this experience, that I never for a moment doubted I was going to find my Roman experiences duplicated by their American parallel. Indeed, they were not similar experiences, they were one and the same; I never doubted it then, and I don't doubt it now—in spite of the best efforts of an expert in abnormal psychology to shake my conviction.

LXXIX

I LIE silent, trying to adjust my thoughts to this strange situation. I go back over my last moments of consciousness, and this thought comes to me: " Why am I so sure that Marcia is dead? I only know that she was struck."

I try to raise my head, and find that I am very weak. " Mother, will you ring for a nurse, please? "

She does so, and when the woman comes, I say: " Is Marcia Penny in the hospital? "

" No, sir," replies the woman. " She has not been here for some time."

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" She was arrested? "

" Yes, Mr. Faber; and then she lost her position."

" Have you heard about her being hurt? "

" No, sir. Was she? "

" Will you ring up police headquarters, please? "

There is a telephone in the room, with a switch whereby it can be shut off when desired. I know this detail—because, as it happens, my father and I went over the plans of this building before it was put up. The woman complies with my request, and I listen to her questions, and I know the answers she is getting as well as if I heard the words. I see the look of distress on her face.

" They say Marcia was hit on the head just now, while the police were arresting some reds who were being expelled from St. Thomas's church."

" And how is she? "

" They say she was taken to the emergency hospital."

" Call there, please."

Again I wait. My mother is holding my hand, and mine is trembling and cold—I know, because hers feels so hot.

" Never mind, Luke dear! " she whispers.

" Wait, mother, wait," I say.

The nurse asks a question, and catches her breath, and turns to me with a face of awe. " They say Marcia is dead, sir."

I lie there, trying to repress my dreadful sobbing—because I see how it frightens my poor mother. " Oh, it is my fault! It is my fault! "

She hears me whispering this, over and over. She says: " How can that be, Luke dear? "

" I started this business of raiding the reds. I let that bald-headed fool, Calvus—I mean Calvin—draw me into it; and now Marcia is gone! I have lost her! "

My poor parent has seen me step suddenly out of the

grave, as it were, and terror possesses her that I may slide back into that dark abode. She tries to reason me out of all this madness.

" Luke, how can this woman mean so much to you? "

" I loved her, mother—I couldn't love anybody else! "

" Where did you learn to love her? "

" In Rome."

" But when were you in Rome, son? "

" Just now—just a few minutes ago."

" But, son "—I see her trying to be patient, and use the least exciting words—" how could you be in Rome when you have been lying on this bed, and I have been with you every single day? "

" How long have I been here, mother? "

" It was three weeks this afternoon."

" That is just the time I spent in ancient Rome. Marcia was there, and I loved her. And you were there."

" I, Luke? "

" You were a matron of Rome in the year 138 B.C., and you wore a beautiful palla with purple flowers embroidered on it, and you sent a whole wagon-load of good things to eat to the flamen of the pantheon at Ostia, on the day of the Feriæ Furrinæ, because you were so grateful to the holy Apollo and to his beloved son Æsculapius."

" But, Luke, that is nonsense; I——"

" Wait a minute, mother. Didn't you send a load of food? "

" Yes, son, but I sent it to the Charities Committee of St. Thomas's church, so you see it was quite different."

" But you sent it as an offering, just the same. You were praying for my recovery."

" Yes, of course."

I am tempted a little bit to add: " And to the same gods? " But I know that I cannot interest her in the idea

that the Romans had a great father divinity and a compassionate healing son.

LXXX

THERE is a pause while my devoted parent tries to adjust her mind to this singular whim of mine. Will it be better to drop the subject, or to chat about it, in order to keep me from grieving over the mysterious Marcia? She decides upon the latter course.

" My son, do I understand that all this time you have been unconscious you were dreaming you were in ancient Rome? "

" Yes, mother, you may call it dreaming—I suppose that is the easiest way. But all the same, I know it was no dream. It was Rome."

" How extraordinary! " she says, with her tact that I have never known to fail.

" Listen, mother. Was I entirely unconscious all the time? "

" No, you would mutter a few words now and then."

" I thought so; for sometimes my Roman consciousness would seem to weaken, and I would have glimpses of America. That made my Roman parents think there was something wrong with my mind. Do you remember the words I said, mother? "

" Yes, I wrote them down, because Dr. Michaels thought they might give a clue to your mental states." The good soul took up her handbag, and drew out several slips of paper. " You kept saying ' penna.' "

" But that was Marcia's name in Rome."

" It didn't mean anything to us."

" What else did I say? "

" You said, a great many times, ' pennavia.' "

" But that was the name of the priest! "

" What priest? "

" The priest of Æsculapius, whom you brought to my bedside to pray for my recovery."

" But, son——"

I see the bewilderment on the dear, gentle face, and I break in: " You *did* bring some priest! "

" I brought Dr. Featherway, naturally."

" Well, there you have it! Don't you see that Pennavia is simply the Latin for Featherway? Tell me, was it while he was here that I began to talk? "

" He was here, and Father Rafferty also."

" Oh, you got Rafferty! I see—he was Raffertius, the priest of Apollo. It sounds funny when you accent it on the second syllable. Also Dr. Bull was here, I know—we called him Taurus. You got all three—and I knew it! "

" Oh, Luke, how strange! "

My mother stops suddenly and glances at the nurse, who is still standing by the telephone, listening in awe. There is disapproval in mother's glance, for according to her social code, no employee should manifest curiosity—even if the world should be in process of blowing up.

The nurse takes the hint, and excuses herself quickly. When she has closed the door, I continue: " You went to St. Thomas's to pray for me—and to St. Anne's also? "

" Yes, Luke," she confesses.

" In Rome you went to the temple of Æsculapius, and you slept there, and afterwards you told me that you had dreamed about automobile racing. I tried to explain to you that it was something that was going to happen in the future, but it was too much for your mind. You see, mother, you are very conservative, and it hurts you to think about anything you haven't been used to."

"I suppose so, my son," says my devoted parent. If these strange feats had been performed by a clergyman, and in the name of Jesus, they would have been miracles, but coming in this unorthodox way, they were like items in the newspaper, which she reads at the breakfast table and exclaims over, but will have forgotten by the next day. The one real thing to her is that her beloved son has come back to life. There are tears of joy perpetually welling into her eyes, and what she is really concerned about is to say the right things that will keep me alive, and not excite or distress me.

LXXXI

My mind goes back over that Roman holiday. Of course, I don't really want to think about anything but Marcia; I want to sink into abysses of grief; but because of this poor soul at my bedside, who has been tortured for three weeks, I have to force myself to dwell on other aspects of the adventure.

"Mother," I ask, "what have you decided about Quint's divorce?"

I see a look of consternation upon her face.

"How did you know about that, Luke?"

"I know because he told me. He showed me Camilla's letter."

"But he only got it this morning, son!"

"I know; he showed it to me this morning—at Thalassa. I was there in the garden."

"That really is the most amazing thing, Luke, for we haven't told a soul about this dreadful matter—not even the girls."

"You will find I know everything that happened,

mother. Isn't it the fact that father paid a lot of money to Bobbie Julius so that he would shut up about the killing of Jerry Fields? "

" Hush, son! Don't talk so loud! "

My mother looks towards the door in alarm; and I lower my voice. " Father and grandfather promised to drop opposition to Valentine, and let him have that water-power franchise. That is so, isn't it? "

" We had to do it, son; you were lying unconscious, and we couldn't get at the real facts, and that disgusting, vulgar blackmailer we have got for mayor was threatening to indict you——"

" I know, mother, he was very bad in Rome—he wanted to put down the strike, and at the same time pretend to be a friend of the common man."

There was a pause.

" Tell me this," I resumed. " Have you heard about Hortense yet? "

" What about her, son? "

" I didn't tell you in Rome, because I was afraid it would hurt you too much. She wrote me a letter yesterday, saying that she thinks I don't love her enough, and she won't marry me."

" But, son, Hortense wouldn't write any such letter while you are lying here at death's door! "

" She wouldn't send it, perhaps, but you'll find she has it written. She has her mind made up. Go to the telephone and ask her! "

My mother shrinks from this test. " Oh, son, don't break off with Hortense! She is a lovely girl, and we are so anxious for you to be married. You do owe some duty to the Fabers——"

Thus far the blessed soul; then she stops, because she must not get me excited. I must have at least a day or

two to make sure of staying alive, before I am led to the altar in the interest of posterity!

" Mother," I say, " try to forgive me, for I hate to make you suffer. But I couldn't possibly marry Hortense or anybody now."

" But, son——"

" If you had only seen Marcia! If you had any idea what I felt for her! "

I go on to tell her the story—it is the only consolation I can have now. I pour out all my longing and despair, and my mother has never heard anything so terrible, so bewildering. A dream story, in ancient Rome—yet it is a real story, too, for has not mother heard the nurse say that there actually was a Marcia Penny, working in this hospital, and have not the police reported that she has been killed while defending the unemployed strikers in one of their efforts to seek shelter in the churches?

" But, Luke," protests my mother, " what madness, to think that you could have been happy with such a woman, living such a life! "

" I didn't expect to be happy, mother. Who is happy? I tried to draw her out of that life, but I failed. She had to die."

" What could she expect to accomplish, son? "

" I asked her that, and she said that we patricians could not understand, because we didn't believe in moral forces."

" But what nonsense, son! Of course I believe in moral forces. Does that mean I am obliged to go out on to the streets and get my head broken by the police? "

" No, mother, don't do that! We can't either of us understand—but I keep thinking about what I read somewhere, that the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church. Maybe this is another religion! "

LXXXII

Now here I am in the hands of a specialist in abnormal psychology, Dr. Michaels, who is trying to find out everything that is wrong with my mind. I tell him that his method is to classify the troubles, tagging them and putting them away in compartments. A new kind of magic, a cure by words; when the afflictions have been labelled with imposing Greek and Latin words, then everything is all right. But he is a nice fellow, and our discussions are worth the price of admission. We both understand clearly what the family considers to be his job: to get me sufficiently quieted down, so that I can bring myself to the point of picking one of those numerous immaculate and charming virgins who are escorted on to the main platform of the marriage market every year. There must be some young Fabers, besides that poor little misbegotten daughter of Quint's!

We talk about Marcia, naturally—she being the main obstacle which his science has to move out of my path. The method is the same, of affixing Greek and Latin labels. He tells me that Marcia was a victim of a common mental disorder known as the " messianic complex "; also that she was a schizophreniac and a paranoiac, and other such things. He calls my attention to the universality of the impulse to " save " the human race by this or that kind of reform, always different throughout all history. And of course I am no lover of reformers as a class. But somehow not all the Greek and Latin names in the medical dictionary can keep me from comparing every woman I meet with Marcia, and wishing I had Marcia.

She has had the terrible effect of unsettling my opinions.

Even thinking about her, while writing this narrative, has made me a different man. I find that I am no longer so sure about anything as I used to be about everything. I cannot open my lips to express my opinion without hearing in my thoughts the mockery or denunciation of this female messiah. I say to myself: "What would Marcia think about it?" And since as a rule I know that my opinion wouldn't please her, I don't say it. This has had the effect of making me rather silent, and puzzling to my friends. My American parents now regard me with the same uneasiness that I used to note in my Roman parents. I suppose it is the working in me of "moral forces." Apparently Marcia was mistaken in her idea that the patrician class is entirely immune to this affliction.

I have talked a great deal with Dr. Michaels about my Roman holiday. He never wavers in the orthodox scientific certainty that it was an "hallucination." But he offers no theory as to how the hallucination managed to equip itself with the facts as to what my family and friends were doing for three weeks. Orthodox science protects its orthodoxy by the simple method of excluding those facts which do not fit. But I have an idea that my experience is having upon my neurologist the same effect that Marcia had upon me. I notice that he does not speak with his old assurance, and sometimes he refrains from speaking.

What do I think about the problem myself? I do not know. I have been reading a lot of modern speculation, and I note that even the physicists are coming to take time out of consciousness; and if that be possible, why may there not be other kinds of mentality with other forms than time? I am not trying to be mystical, but scientific. I ask myself, can we be certain that the past is over and done with and dead? Can we be sure there is not some

wider and more extensive form of mentation than our own, to which past and present and future would all appear as co-existent?

I don't mean merely the religious idea, that to the mind of God a thousand years are as a day. I am thinking of the minds of more evolved beings than ourselves. Manifestly, if space is curved, as Einstein asserts, there will be a possibility of beholding the past; for the rumble of the ancient Roman chariots is still echoing somewhere in space, and if the vibrations return, who shall say we may not be able to devise instruments so subtle that we can watch the past, as we now, by television, watch events on the other side of the Atlantic?

History repeats itself, the old adage tells us. Just how many times does it repeat itself, and for periods of what length? If my Roman holiday tells me truth, the American Republic now stands at the moment between the destruction of Carthage and the murder of Tiberius and Caius Gracchus, champions of the people's cause. Is that parallel to be continued? Are we to see a Sulla in America, and a Cæsar? Will these be followed by a Nero and a Caligula? You can see how the mere asking of such questions troubles the mind of Luke Faber of Rivertown. It undermines all the formulæ whereby I have lived, and leaves me in a state of chaos.

LXXXIII

Such is my story. I finish this report and Dr. Michaels reads it, and we go over it, and he asks me questions about this and that, and I put in a sentence here and there to explain matters. At last he tells me it is satisfactory, from his point of view, and I sit with the completed manu-

script in my hands. It has taken me quite a while to prepare, and I shall miss it; I wonder what will take its place in my life.

I sit pondering the problem, when the telephone rings, and I hear the gentle voice of Virginia Tully.

"Luke, aren't you ever coming to see me any more?"

"I don't know, Jinny," I answer. "I have been awfully crowded since my illness."

"I know, Luke. I know the whole situation, and I don't want to worry you—but oh, I do miss you so! Listen, dear; while you are making up your mind what to do for your family—surely it wouldn't do any harm for you just to come to dinner! Don't you remember that roast duck we had the last time? I'll go out and find another, and oh, it would make me so happy, I couldn't find words to tell you!"

She doesn't have to find words; the overtones of her voice make me see the tears in her eyes, and feel the warmth of her embrace. I think: what is there in my life any better than Virginia? I am through with Hortense, that I know; and certainly it is abnormal, as Dr. Michaels insists, that an able-bodied young man should go on worshipping the memory of a ghost in ancient Rome. Maybe I shall fall for some one of the charmers whom my mother brings evening after evening to our family dinner-table—always with the same unfailing innocence of soul, and by the same happy chance putting them alongside me or directly opposite. But that fall of man has not come about yet; and meantime, here is Virginia, tenderness and longing incarnate in a voice over the telephone!

"All right, Jinny," I say, "I'll come." After all, a man cannot think about himself all the time.

THE END

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